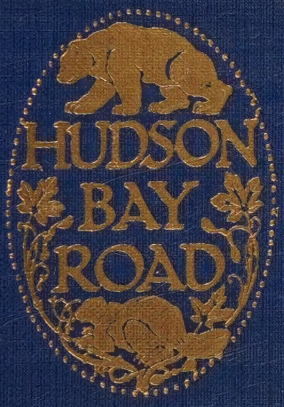
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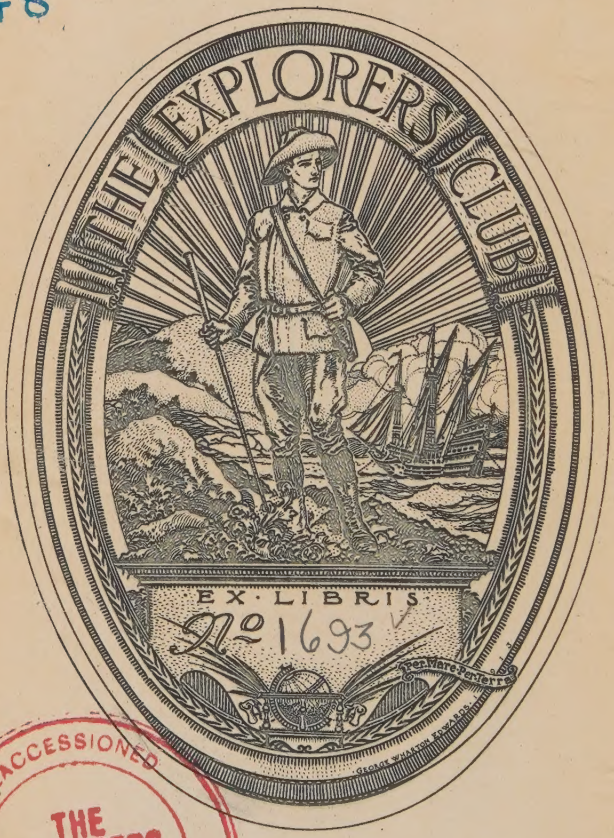

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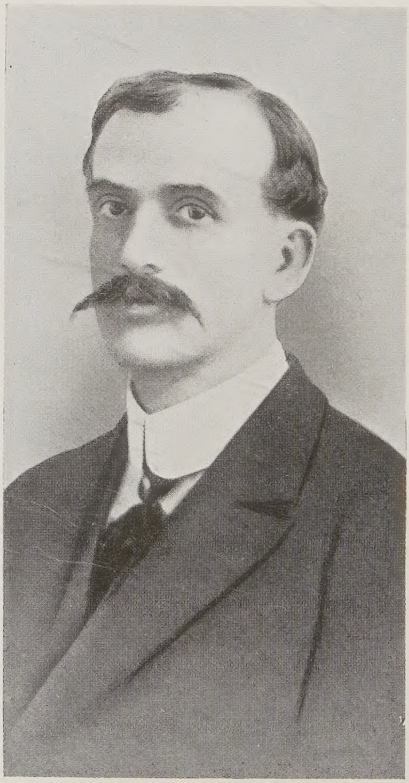

A. H. DE TRÉMAUDAN

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THE HUDSON BAY ROAD

(1498–1915)

BY

A. H. DE TRÉMAUDAN

OF THE MANITOBA BAR

(Founder and for two years Editor of the "Herald" at the Pas, Dec. 1911 to Dec. 1913)

WITH
30 ILLUSTRATIONS
AND 2 MAPS

NEW YORK

E. P. DUTTON & CO.

1916

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1693

To

MY PAS FRIENDS

THIS WORK

IS

DEDICATED

FOREWORD

"Sir,—I hope that I shall live to see a city at the terminus of a Hudson's Bay Railway. . . . It is not enough for us to confine our views to Canada that is now settled, we must look ahead, we must push northward as far as colonisation can go. I have great confidence that before many years are past we shall see towns and villages on the shores of Hudson's Bay, as we see on the shores of Norway, where people will be prosperously engaged in the lumbering business, the pulp industry, the fishing industry, the mining industry, and others. This is what I hope Canadians will see ere long."—Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the House of Commons, April 3, 1906.

"The people of Manitoba are self-reliant and very optimistic as to the future. The fact that it is expected that the Hudson's Bay Railway will be completed to Port Nelson in 1916 inspires not only confidence but enthusiasm. Every mile of this railway is within the boundaries of Manitoba. The benefits of this route to Europe, when completed, especially to this province, cannot be over-estimated." — Sir Rodmond P. Roblin, as quoted by the *Monetary Times Annual*, 1915.

PREFACE

BETWEEN Sweden and Finland extends, from the 60th degree of latitude to the 66th, a body of water about 450 miles in length, and from 90 to 130 miles in width. It is known as the Gulf of Bothnia, the name formerly given to the country extending along its east and west shores, separated in the north by the Tornea River, and now belonging to Sweden and Russia respectively. Although the depth of water in this inland sea is from 20 to 50 fathoms, it freezes over in winter so as to be crossed by sledges and carriages.

Between Aland Island at its southern extremity and the Tornea at its northern end, although in those countries very little of the population live in towns, several important cities can be found, such as Gefle, population 32,000; Soderham, 11,000; Sundsvall, 15,000; Hernosand, 6000; Uleaborg (about 60 degrees), 16,000; Bjorneborg, 13,000. On the Swedish side, a railroad parallels the coast at a short distance inland, and from the northern extremity of the gulf, crossing the peninsula north-westerly, connects with the Atlantic Ocean at Narvic, in Norway, at 68° 50′ latitude, almost a full degree beyond the arctic circle. On the Russian side another railroad connects Bjorneborg, a little above Aland Island, with Tornea, at the mouth of the river of the same name by 66 degrees. By this it will be seen that the Pas, the southern terminus of the Hudson Bay Road, is 6 degrees further south, Port Nelson 3 degrees further south, and the most northerly point of Hudson Strait only one degree further north than Aland Island, at the south extremity of the Gulf of Bothnia; that Tornea, the furthest point north on the gulf, is 5 degrees further north than Hudson Strait, 9 degrees further north than Port Nelson, and 12 degrees further north than the Pas; that Narvic, the terminus of the Swedish-Norwegian rail-

way system, is a little more than 11 degrees further north than Port Nelson, the proposed terminus of the Hudson Bay Railway, and a little over 7 degrees further north than Hudson Strait; in fine, that Hudson Bay has over the Gulf of Bothnia the advantage that it never freezes over.

No one doubts that the Gulf of Bothnia is of incalculable service to the adjacent countries for the transportation of the crops which are their most important products, although the climate is said to be very rigorous, principally in Finland, in the northern part of which the sun is absent for the two months of December and January every winter, which itself lasts from six to nine months. Moreover, the area of Finland, north of the 60th degree (which, by the way, represents the northern limit of Greater Manitoba), is 144,255 square miles, or 33,845 square miles less than the three constituencies of the Pas, Grand Rapids and Churchill - Nelson, and its population is close to 3,000,000. Although the soil is for the most part stony and poor, ten years ago its exports amounted to $39,000,000, and its total foreign commerce to $84,000,000. The attention of my readers may also be drawn to Archangel, a seaport on the White Sea, which is very much to Russia what Hudson Bay is to Canada. Archangel is a city of 40,000 inhabitants and is the capital of the province of the same name. The province contains 331,490 square miles and has a population of 348,500 people. The port is closed for six months by ice, being almost seven degrees of latitude further north than Fort Churchill.

This may serve to demonstrate that, all climatic conditions guarded, Manitoba has acquired much valuable territory, and that, the feasibility of the Hudson Bay route once admitted, the future of the Pas, the natural distributing point for the whole of Western Canada and its wonderful wealth in agricultural and other natural products, is assured.

The purpose of this book is chiefly to tell of the country along the Hudson Bay Railway now under construction, of Hudson Bay, the Mediterranean Sea of North America, and of the resources to be found in Manitoba's new territory, including the great inland sea on which it borders. Much has

been written on the subject in the three years gone by: I claim only one merit, that of summing up. I shall feel sufficiently recompensed if I have been able thus to interest those who are anxious to form an opinion about the vast domain recently acquired by Manitoba, and the great advantages offered by the Hudson Bay Route.[1]

A. H. de T.

St. Boniface, Manitoba, 1913–15.

[1] I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to Rev. Fr. G. A. Morice, O.M.I., and Rev. R. C. Johnstone, both of whom have kindly assisted me in my effort to make this book as complete and interesting as possible, by placing at my disposal, the former his splendid private library, the latter the reference portion of Winnipeg's public library dealing with my subject.

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THE HUDSON BAY ROAD

CHAPTER I

DISCOVERY OF HUDSON BAY—THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

No one will probably ever tell the world by whom Hudson Bay was first discovered. It seems reasonable to infer from the Cabot planisphere of 1544 that the entrance to the strait was reached by this famous navigator as early as 1498. A number of maps ranging from that of Ruysch in 1508 to that of Ortelius in 1570 undoubtedly refer to the mouth of Hudson Strait, and Dr. G. M. Asher[1] is authority for the statement that between the years 1558 and 1567 Portuguese voyagers "seem to have advanced slowly, step by step, first along the shores of Newfoundland, then up the mouth of Hudson's Strait, then through that strait, and at last into Hudson's Bay."[2] It seems also certain that Davis passed over the entrance of Hudson Strait in August 1587, and that Weymouth sailed up as far as Charles Island, on the south side of the strait, in 1602, five years before Henry Hudson's first

[1] *Henry Hudson the Navigator*, by Dr. G. M. Asher.

[2] It may not be out of place to mention here the name of Laurent Ferrer Maldonado, a Spaniard, who was supposed to have passed in 1588 from the coast of Labrador to the Pacific Ocean, calling the passage the Strait of Anian. The book relating this most wonderful achievement was translated by Charles Amoretti, librarian at Milan in 1812, and several voyages of those days were undertaken on the strength of the information found in it. Cf. Relacion del Descubrimiento de Estrecho de Anian hecho por el autor. Quam vidi MS. apud D. Hieromymum Mascarenas rejium ordinem militarium, deunde conciliæ Portugalliæ Senatorem, Segoviensem nunc Antistitem. Expeditionem autem hanc nauticam se fecisse anno 1588 autor ait.—*Bib. Hisp.*, tom. ii. p. 2.

voyage in search of the North Pole, which gave this unfortunate navigator his first idea of a North-West passage, seven years before the old commander discovered the river which bears his name and on which is to be found the world's second largest city, New York, eight years before the *Discovery* sailed into James Bay, nine years before this bark's mutinous crew cast Hudson with his young son upon the waters that he had discovered, to perish. For " so passed Henry Hudson down the Long Trail on June 21, 1611! Did he suffer that blackest of all despair—loss of vision, of faith in his dream? Did life suddenly seem to him a cruel joke in which he had played the part of the fool? Who can tell?

" What became of him? A silence as of a grave in the sea rests over his fate. Barely the shadow of a legend illumines his last hours; though Indians of Hudson Bay to this day tell folk-lore yarns of the first Englishman who came to the bay and was wrecked. When Radisson came overland to the bay fifty years later he found an old house *all marked by bullets.* Did Hudson take his last stand inside that house? Did the loyal Ipswich man fight his last fight against the powers of darkness there where the Goddess of Death lines her shores with the bodies of the dead? Also, the Indians told Radisson childish fables of a ' ship with sails ' having come to the bay; but many ships came in those fifty years: Button's to hunt in vain for Hudson; Munck, the Dane's, to meet a fate worse than Hudson's.

" Hudson's shallop went down to as utter silence as the watery graves of those old sea Vikings who rode out to meet death on the billow. A famous painting represents Hudson huddled panic-stricken with his child and the ragged castaways in a boat driving to ruin among the ice fields. I like better to think as we know last of him—standing with bound arms and face to face, shouting defiance at the fleeing enemy. They could kill him, but they could not crush him! It was more as a Viking would have liked to die. He had left the world benefited more than he could have dreamed—this pathfinder of two empires' commerce. He had fought his fight. He had done his work. He had chased his idea down

the Long Trail. What more could the most favoured child of the gods ask? With one's task done, better to die in harness than rot in some garret of obscurity, or grow garrulous in an imbecile old age—the fate of so many great benefactors of humanity!"[1]

The accounts of all Hudson's voyages were written by himself or under his orders: they being the first authentic relations of voyages in those parts, it seems just that he should be credited with the discovery of the great inland sea which bears his name.

The following year Admiral Sir Thomas Button undertook to follow up Hudson's discoveries and to search for him: he spent the winter of 1612-13 at Port Nelson which he named after his mate who died there. Scurvy decimated his crews and he sailed back to England disheartened. He was followed in 1614 by Captain Gibbon who, however, did not go farther than Labrador, and, in 1615-16, by Baffin, who discovered the land of that name.

Jens Munck, the Danish sailor-boy who had attained fame in Iceland, Nova Zembla, and Russia, then appeared on the scene. On Sunday, May 16, 1619, he put out for Hudson Bay and in September discovered the Indian River of the Strangers, now known as Churchill, moving up stream to a point since known as Munck's Cove. At that time the country was covered with timber to the water's edge: Munck decided to winter there. Not familiar with the excessive cold climate of the country, the navigator and his little party fell victims to scurvy and one after the other sixty-one of the men died, Munck himself penning what he intended to be his farewell to the world in the following words:

"As I have now no more hope of life in this world, I request for the sake of God if any Christians should happen to come here, they will bury my poor body together with the others found, and this my journal forward to the King. . . . Herewith, good-night to all the world, and my soul to God. . . .

"JENS MUNCK."

[1] *The Conquest of the Great North-West*, by Agnes C. Laut, vol. i. p. 65 *et seq.*

With two of his men, however, he survived the awful experience of the plague and, after a terrible voyage, reached Denmark again. He had planned to colonise the country he had discovered, but instead he had to go back to active service in the Danish navy. He died in 1628. Had he succeeded in bringing his countrymen to Churchill, "as far as the North-West is concerned, there would have been no British North America." [1]

Fox and James followed in 1631, the former from Hull, with the help of Sir Thomas Roe and Sir John Wolstenholme, the latter from Bristol with the aid of merchants of that town. Both had letters for the Emperor of Japan.

Fox discovered successively Roe's Welcome, Marble Island, which he named Brooke Cobham after Sir John Brooke, one of his patrons, Mistake Bay, and other points. On August 2 he reached Fort Churchill believing the river to be the entrance to the South Sea. James was to fall into the same error. Resuming his voyage, Fox sailed down the coast to Port Nelson and remained there a few days, restoring a cross which he believed had been erected by Sir Thomas Button in 1613, and nailing on it the following inscription: "I suppose this Cross was first erected by Sir Thomas Button, 1613. It was again raised by Luke Foxe, Capt. of the *Charles*, in the right and possession of my dread Soverigne Charles the first, King of Great Brittaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, the 15 of August, 1631. This land is called New Wales." [2] Munck had called the country New Denmark: neither name was to be preserved.

In the meantime James had sailed across the bay from the western end of Hudson Strait, arriving at Fort Churchill on August 11, a few days only after Fox's departure. Leaving Fort Churchill, he did not land at Port Nelson, and therefore was first to explore the unknown coast beyond and the bay that bears his name. No more than his friend Fox had he the opportunity to deliver his letters to the Emperor of Japan. The two commanders parted at Cape

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 92.
[2] *The Search for the Western Sea*, by Lawrence J. Burpee, p. 54.

Henrietta Maria, not to meet again until their return to England.

"Reviewing the geographical results of these several voyages into Hudson Bay, up to and including 1642, it is seen that Hudson discovered for the first time the general features of the strait, and the eastern coast of the bay down to its extreme foot. Button made known the rough outlines of the west coast, from Wager Bay to Port Nelson. Foxe and James both contributed to a more exact delineation of the coast covered by Button, and both almost simultaneously, though quite independently, explored the hitherto unknown coast from Port Nelson to Cape Henrietta, while James alone explored the eastern shores of James Bay, without correcting Hudson's error in dividing it into two. This odd mistake was not, in fact, rectified until many years later, when the explorations of the Hudson's Bay Company dispelled the illusion, and Cape Monmouth, with the long peninsula that lay behind it — on the maps — disappeared into thin air. Although the primary object of all these voyages was not accomplished, they resulted in a very important piece of exploration, the charting of the entire coast-line of one of the largest and most remarkable of inland seas." [1]

For almost a half century, there seems to have been no further attempt on the part of the Europeans, either to discover the route to the South Sea by the so-called North-West passage, or to explore the strait and bays, for the purpose of settlement or commerce. Apparently the many sailors who had landed, some for a whole winter at a time, at different points of the inland sea coasts, had not had occasion to see furs in quantities sufficient to attract their attention, and what has proved to this day such an enormous source of inestimable revenues and profits, was not even dreamed of by these navigators, bent on a totally different mission. Fifty years after their time, men there were found who, in their pursuit of the fur trade, heard of Hudson Bay and set upon the task of again sailing into its waters, exploring its coasts, and fully investigating the natural resources of its district.

[1] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 63.

In France were born the two men who were destined to give Hudson Bay the fame it has retained to this day. One was Pierre Esprit de Radisson, a native of Paris, where he was born in 1636, the other Ménart Chouart sieur Desgroseillers,[1] who was born at Charly St. Cyr near Meaux in 1621. They were brothers-in-law, the latter having married Radisson's widowed sister. While there is no certainty as to the wanderings of these two men in search of adventure and fortune, it would appear that they had at least "obtained valuable information as to the geography of the regions about Hudson Bay, and the inexhaustible harvest of furs that awaited those enterprising enough to establish trading posts in this northern country." [2]

On their return from one of their expeditions about and possibly west of the Great Lakes, they had unsuccessfully endeavoured to interest friends at Three Rivers, as well as the government at Quebec. The man who was at the head of the latter had confiscated and turned to his own use 600,000 beaver skins that they had brought from the north and refused them any assistance. At Port Royal they had enlisted the services of the very man who later was to lead them to the shores which they sought, Captain Gillam: but "opposite Hudson Straits the navigator had been terrified by the ice and lost heart." [3] The two adventurers then crossed the ocean and decided to ask the assistance of Charles II., King of England. Thus was formed in 1666 the famous Hudson's Bay Company, called in its charter of 1670 the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay. To this day Western Canada almost reveres the memory of what is known as the oldest established company in the British Empire, if not in the world. Prince Rupert, cousin of King Charles, the Duke of Albemarle, Earl of Craven, Sir George Carteret, Sir John Robinson, Sir Peter Colleton, General Monck, and a number of other noblemen or merchants, as incorporators, were granted a charter with such vast and

[1] Married to a daughter of Abraham Martin, who gave his name to the Plains of Abraham.

[2] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 65.

[3] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 102.

Eskimo Family on the Polar Barrens
Photo by Capt. French of the R.N.W.M.P., 1914.

extraordinary powers that some of these make people of our epoch smile in wonderment. To quote the document itself, the company was given "the whole trade of all the seas, streights, and bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, and sounds, in whatever latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the streights, commonly called Hudson's streights, together with all the lands, countries, and territories upon the coasts and confines of the seas, streights, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks, and sounds aforesaid, which are not now actually possessed by any of our subjects, or by the subjects of any other Christian prince or State."[1]

"This was generous indeed. But some there are who, remembering the axiom, 'nobody giveth what he possesseth not,' may find this liberality of a cheap kind, since never before had an English monarch claimed as his what, on the 2nd of May 1670, Charles II. so kindly bestowed on his kinsman and future associates in the fur trade."[2]

Two small vessels, the *Eagle* and *Nonsuch*, had sailed in 1667 under the respective commands of Captains Starnard and Gillam, another, the *Wavero*, in 1668 and 1669, with Captain Newland. Port Nelson and Rupert Bay had been reached: Charles Fort, near Charlton Island, had been built: the first trading in furs had taken place: a new route of commerce had been established.

In rapid succession posts[3] were located at Albany, Moose, Rupert, Nelson, Severn, Churchill Rivers, the whole territory itself receiving the name of Rupert's Land after the chief promoter and first governor of the company, the "fiery" Prince Rupert of Edgehill.

Unable to make satisfactory arrangements with the company, Radisson and Desgroseillers had in the meantime (1674) crossed over to France, the former once more changing his allegiance (1684), and from that time to the day of his death remaining in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company.

[1] *History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada*, by the Rev. A. G. Morice, O.M.I., vol. i. p. 10.

[2] Morice, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 10.

[3] For typical description of a Hudson's Bay Company's post *see* Appendix A.

While serving under the flag of France, he had had no trouble to prove to the Gentlemen Adventurers of England that if he could do without them, they could not do without him. In fact, in its own interest, the company deemed it advisable to re-establish the two men in the positions which they had once occupied.

Without following the noble traders into all the details of their settlement and commerce on and about Hudson Bay and Rupert's Land, it may be mentioned as an important feature of the history of those times that the enmity which then existed between England and France had its natural repercussion even as far as the far-away waters of North America. No one can read the history of those days without admiring the daring exploits of de Troyes, d'Iberville, and La Pérouse and without somewhat wondering at the easy surrenders of Samuel Hearne at Fort Prince of Wales and Humphrey Martin at York Factory in 1782. But these may be explained from the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company was essentially a company of merchants and traders, as their motto implies, "Pro Pelle Cutem" ("Skin for skin"), who at times "forgot the flag that floated over it," in spite of the assertion of contemporary writers to the contrary.[1]

The principal merit of the Hudson's Bay Company lies in having, for the 250 years that they have navigated it, proved beyond doubt to the world and principally to this continent that the Hudson Bay route is the shortest route of commerce between the old world and the new, and that the dangers in its course, of which more anon, are no worse than those to be met on other routes further south. In this alone there is enough glory for the Hudson's Bay Company to have the right to expect and receive both the admiration and the respect of every true Canadian and Britisher.

[1] *The Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company*, by George Bryce, M.A., LL.D., p. 19.

CHAPTER II

KELSEY—LA FRANCE

In spite of great losses sustained through wars and tempests, the Hudson's Bay Company so firmly established itself in its territory, such an immense quantity of valuable furs was, year after year, shipped home by her factors, that soon the value of her shares doubled and trebled and doubled and trebled again in value. Magnificent dividends were distributed among her members. To be a shareholder of the Hudson's Bay Company meant to be a wealthy individual: only men with great fortunes were in a position to buy stock from the "old worthies" as the Honourable Adventurers were called among the common people.

So far—about 1690—no attempt had been made to found trading posts inland, and no one for the company had undertaken to find out anything about the very object for which it would appear that it had been established, viz., in the words of the charter, "the discovery of a new passage to the South Sea."[1] From reports that the French, not content with their few posts on the bay, were steadily pushing westward from the Great Lakes and threatening to intercept the Indian fleets of canoes before they reached the bay, it became evident that measures must be afforded to protect the company's posts against the competing traders.

[1] "We cannot join in the praise ascribed to the Hudson's Bay Company whose only merits (if they have any) are, at any rate, of the negative kind. Their total disregard of every object for which they obtained and have now held a royal charter for nearly 150 years entitles them to anything but praise. The great leading feature on which their petition for an exclusive charter was grounded, the discovery of a North-West Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific, has not only been totally neglected, but, unless they have been grossly calumniated, thwarted to every means in their power."—"Lord Selkirk and the North-West Company," *Quarterly Review*, 1816.

Henry Kelsey, an apprentice boy, who had been in the service of the company for two years, on different occasions had expressed the desire of travelling with the Indians. In the summer of 1690 Governor Geyer of Port Nelson reports that he "sent up Henry Kelsey (who cheerfully undertook the journey) into the country of the Assinae Poets (Assiniboines), with the Captain of that nation, to call, encourage, and invite the remoter Indians to a trade with us."[1] Just how far the boy went, if indeed he went at all, will probably never be known, as the account of his journey given in his journal is of such a vague nature that competent writers, after Joseph Robson,[2] who lived in the days of the traveller, have expressed the opinion that he never left the shores of Hudson Bay. Others[3] think, however, that he may have been north of Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan, in the region now known as Cumberland, and the Pas.[4] Others again, prominent amongst whom is to be found R. H. Hunter of the Canadian Topographical Surveys, believe that he never came near to that lake and that river, but may have gone to the Athabasca country. Those of our readers who are familiar with the topography of the country extending between the Pas and Port Nelson, and Norway House and Port Nelson, will agree with Mr. Hunter that it would be difficult for men, even Indians, to have gone 500 miles in sixty days, over morasses, bog, and tangled underbrush—for Kelsey states that, to travel faster, he and his party had abandoned their canoes. Only authors not conversant with the conditions extant along the Hudson Bay

[1] *Hudson's Bay Reports*, 1749.

[2] "According to his journal, Kelsey did not go by land and water above 500 miles in two months, and as it does not appear that he had any compass with him to know upon which point he travelled, he probably did not go in all 120 leagues in a straight line from Deering's point, and perhaps much less; for if Kelsey only computed these miles he would take care not to make them less than they were."—*An Account of Six Years' Residence in Hudson's Bay from* 1733 *to* 1736 *and* 1744 *to* 1747, by Joseph Robson. MDCCLII., London.

[3] Agnes C. Laut, Dr. E. Coues, Charles N. Bell, etc.

[4] We have adopted the spelling of the Geographical Board of Canada. The map of 1857 of Arrowsmith calls the place "Pas."

A TYPICAL INDIAN MAIDEN'S DRESS. NORTHERN MANITOBA'S HINTERLAND. HUSKY DOG

Railway, now under construction, can believe what Miss Agnes C. Laut, this otherwise so well-informed writer, suggests in the following note on the doubt cast by Robson on Kelsey's voyage: " Robson casts doubt on Kelsey having gone inland from Nelson, but Robson was writing in a mood of spite toward his former employers. The reasons given for his doubt are two-fold: (1) Kelsey could not have gone 500 miles in sixty days; (2) in the dry season of July, Kelsey could not have followed an Indian trail. Both objections are absurd. Forty miles a day is not a high average for a good woodsman or canoeman. As to following a trail in July, the very fact that the grass was so brittle made it easy to follow recent tracks. Night camp fire and the general direction of the land would be guides enough for a good pathfinder, let alone the crumpled grasses left behind a horde of wandering Indians." [1] Instead of " brittle " and " crumpled " grasses have muskeg and swamp and the task becomes very arduous indeed.

In all probability the voyage attributed to and related by Kelsey was never made. For this reason, the Hudson's Bay Company after the 1749 inquiry thought it advisable to never again bring it down in support of its claim to the occupation of the territory draining into Hudson Bay by reason of first discovery and exploration.

More conceivable is the story of La France's trip northward from Michilimakinac on Lake Huron, as told by Arthur Dobbs.[2] The son of a French trader married to a Saulteaux woman, Joseph La France, when he was quite young, had travelled as far as the mouth of the Missouri River. Having been in serious trouble with the French authorities at Montreal, he had made up his mind to reach Hudson Bay, and, if possible, enter the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. With this purpose in view, he set out in the early part of 1739, reached Grand Portage on Lake Superior in April 1740, paddled down Rainy River to the Lake of the Woods, which he crossed, arriving at Lake Winnipeg in September. During the winters

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 296.
[2] Arthur Dobbs, *An Account of the Countries adjoining Hudson's Bay. . . .* London, 1744.

of 1740–41 and 1741–42 he appears to have hunted with the Crees about the present district of the Pas, on the Carrot River and Saskeram Lake. In the beginning of March 1742 he was at Cedar Lake, which he calls Lake Pachegoia, and started for the bay. In May he reached the mouth of the river Nelson on Lake Winnipeg, which he called the river Savanne, ascended the Echimamish, crossed over to the Hayes and reached York Factory on June 29, 1742. Although he had followed the most natural and easy route, that of the rivers down current, he had taken double the time in which Kelsey, forty years before, was supposed to have made the trip in the opposite direction, up stream and across muskeg.

With the exception of where the half-breed spent the two winters of 1740-41 and 1741-42, the country described in the narrative of Dobbs is easily recognisable, considering that the writer obtained all his information from Indians. Grave doubts, however, exist about the district over which he travelled in the course of those two winters, which is emphasised by the fact that on his way out of Cedar Lake no mention is made of the Grand Rapids of Saskatchewan, while several on the Nelson and other rivers that he paddled upon are spoken of. The narrative of his journey must forcibly therefore be relegated in the same class as that of Henry Kelsey, in so far as the discovery of the Saskatchewan River, chief waterway and only natural highway, in those days, of the immense territory south of Hudson Bay, is concerned.

CHAPTER III

THE LAVÉRENDRYES

In 1727 there was stationed at Lake Nepigon a man whose name was destined, in after years, to be hailed as that of the discoverer of the Great North-West. Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Vérendrye, or Lavérendrye, the youngest of nine children, was born at Three Rivers, November 17, 1685, of René Gaultier, Chevalier de Varennes, governor of the town, and Marie Boucher. He began his eventful career as a French officer in the War of the Spanish Succession. At the battle of Malplaquet, September 11, 1709, he was left for dead on the field with nine wounds. This devotion to the French crown gave him nothing more than the mere title of lieutenant. On his return to his native land, he took up the life of " coureur de bois " and fur trader, not so much for the profits there were known to be in these callings, as because of his desire to add to the glory of the Motherland by making discoveries of new territory.

The great question of those days was the Western Passage. Through the Indian chief Ochagach, who has been called Western Canada's first geographer, Lavérendrye had learned of a road to it. Aided by Father Degonnor he laid before Governor de Beauharnois a plan which resulted in his leaving Montreal on June 8, 1731, at the head of fifty men and armed, instead of funds which the French governor could not procure from the effeminate Louis XV., with a monopoly of the fur trade in the country through which his venture would take him. With him went three of his sons, Jean Baptiste, Pierre, and François, his nephew Christophe Dufrost de la Jemmeraye, who had already travelled in the west, and the Jesuit Father Mesaiger, the latter as chaplain of the expedition.

On August 26 they reached Grand Portage, at the mouth of the Pigeon River, fifteen leagues south-west of Kaministiquia on Lake Superior. The next day a number of his men, influenced by the evil counsels of his enemies at Montreal, refused to undertake the nine-mile portage. Undaunted and seconded in his efforts by Father Mesaiger, Lavérendrye finally succeeded in coaxing a number of them, who had been with La Jemmeraye at Lake Pepin in what is now Wisconsin and Minnesota, into going to establish the post of Lac la Pluie,[1] later known as Fort St. Pierre, in honour of the chief of the expedition. With the rest of his men he wintered at Kaministiquia. The following year (1732), June 8, Lavérendrye, with his nephew, who had joined him again, Father Mesaiger, two of his sons and seven canoemen, pushed on to the Lake of the Woods, where he built a fort which he named Fort St. Charles, after the Christian name of Governor de Beauharnois, who was using whatever little influence he had at the court of France to facilitate the ends of the expedition.

Fort St. Charles, the site of which was discovered a few years ago by members of the Historical Society of St. Boniface and recently purchased by His Grace Archbishop Langevin, was nothing more than a small group of rough log cabins covered with bark, enclosed in a quadrilateral stockade. It served as a model for all the other posts of the Western Sea to be established during a century or more by Lavérendrye, his successors and imitators.

Making Fort St. Charles his headquarters for a time, Lavérendrye sent La Jemmeraye to Montreal to report on the expedition, and his eldest son Jean Baptiste to erect a fort at the mouth of the Winnipeg River, which was called Fort Maurepas after the French Minister of Colonies, who had done so little, if anything, for him. This stood near the spot where Fort Alexander is to be found to-day.

The discoverer, who had lost more than 43,000 French pounds in the expedition, his three posts having only yielded

[1] Pierre Margry, *Découvertes et établissements des Français dans l'ouest*, etc., 1614–98, vol. vi. p. 586.

600 packs of furs, found it necessary at this juncture to return to Montreal to confer with his partners, who were clamouring for dividends and refusing to send up any further supplies. He also hoped to be able to decide the French king, through the government at Quebec, to bear the expense of a new expedition. Meeting with a refusal from the court of France to come to his help beyond the monopoly of the fur trade that he had been granted before leaving on his first expedition, Lavérendrye was reduced to lease for five years his establishments to his creditors, in order to obtain the necessary cash to proceed with the aim that he had set himself to attain: the discovery of the Western Sea. His canoes laden with supplies, which meant that the explorer was deeper in debt than ever, he set out again for his western posts, full of enthusiasm. During his visit to Quebec he had made arrangements for his eighteen-year-old son, Louis Joseph, to study the making of maps and plans, and so materially assist the party the following year. Father Mesaiger, whose health had been failing, remained in the east, and Father Aulneau de la Touche, another Jesuit father, took his place to confer the consolations of religion unto the members of the expedition.

Travelling ahead of his party in a light canoe, Lavérendrye preceded the provision canoes at Fort St. Charles by several weeks. Soon this fort and Fort Maurepas were almost reduced to starvation. On June 4, 1736, the unfortunate discoverer was grieved beyond expression to learn of the death, on May 10, of his nephew and right hand, La Jemmeraye, at the latter fort, after a brief illness brought on by overwork and exposure. The climax of the commander's trials, however, was reached when, a few days later, on an island off what is now known as Oak Point, his eldest son, Jean Baptiste, Father Aulneau, and nineteen of his men, who had started out to meet the delayed canoes from Montreal, were massacred by a party of Sioux. A day or two later, Sieur Legras arrived from Michilimakinac with the supplies.

Men, less energetic and less enthusiastic, would have been crushed by so severe blows falling all at once: others, with

spirits aroused by the desire of revenge, would have started on the war path against the treacherous Indians. Lavérendrye thought only of the noble mission that he had undertaken: nothing daunted, he moved forward, having first returned to Montreal to equip a third expedition, in 1737.

In rapid succession he ascended the Red River to the forks, and on the present site of the metropolis of Western Canada, Winnipeg, which he reached on September 24, 1738, erected Fort Rouge to replace the fort that the Indians had built for him the previous year, but which he did not find sufficient for his purpose, then paddled up the Assiniboine River and built Fort La Reine, named after the Queen of France, not far from the present city of Portage la Prairie, where he established his second base of operations in the west.

In company with his two sons and fifty Frenchmen and Indians, he spent the winter of 1738–39 in an overland voyage to and from the land of the Mandans on the Missouri,[1] giving in his narrative of the expedition a description of the dress, manners, and habits of the inhabitants of those regions closely resembling the relations of later visitors, such as Lewis and Clark, Alexander Henry, David Thompson, Prince Maximilian of Wied, and Catlin. There his son Pierre attempted to return in the fall of 1739, but, failing to secure guides, he had to return to Fort La Reine.

In the spring of 1741 Lavérendrye had again to repair to Montreal to resist a lawsuit brought against him by jealousy, then the prevailing sin of French Canada. Stupid courtiers there were who would see nothing in the efforts of the noble explorer but cupidity and selfishness. "If more than 40,000 livres of debt which I have on my shoulders are an advantage, then I can flatter myself that I am very rich," pleaded the heartbroken yet undaunted commander.

Returning to Fort La Reine with Fathers du Jaunay and Coquart, Lavérendrye, in the spring of 1742, sent his two

[1] The next man to visit the Mandans of whom there are records was David Thompson in 1797.

youngest sons, Pierre and Louis, to the land of the Mandans once more. There the young men remained for three months before they could decide any of their Indian hosts to accompany them in the expedition westward which was to result in the discovery of the Rocky Mountains in January 1743, at a point in the south-west corner of the present state of Montana. They returned to Fort La Reine on July 2, 1743, to the great relief of their father, who had grown quite uneasy on account of their prolonged absence.

In the intervals of these several expeditions to the land of the Mandans and as early as 1738 Lavérendrye's sons had discovered the west and north ends of Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba, the latter called by them Lac des Prairies. In 1741 they had established Fort Dauphin, explored Lake Winnipegosis and the Saskatchewan River to the forks.[1] They built several forts on the lakes and rivers that they travelled upon, but, unfortunately for the historian, left no records of the years in which they were erected. On a map of 1750, the Saskatchewan River is shown under the name Poskaiao and the Churchill River is called the Rivière des Christinaux. Fort Bourbon is shown on the lake of the same name (now Cedar Lake). When in 1808 Henry[2] reached the present site of the Pas, he found the remains of an old fort, "Fort Poskoia or Basquia,"[3] built by Lavérendrye's sons more than half a century before. Nipawi, des Prairies or St.

[1] With the Pas River.' Strange enough, in the *mémoire* of his services presented to Rouillé, Minister and Secretary of State for the Marine Department, after 1752, which is the last date given by de Vassan, captain of the troops of New France, Pierre Gaultier de Lavérendrye does not mention the discovery of the Saskatchewan River.

[2] The younger. Read in Appendix H the adventure in which his uncle was the party mostly interested at the same place, then called Pasquayah, in October 1775.

[3] Some writers, such as Judge L. A. Prud'homme, are of the opinion that Fort Poskoyac was at the forks of the two Saskatchewans. This interpretation is certainly wrong as one may assure himself by studying Jeffrey's map of 1762 and Bonne's map of 1770, on which the Pas is evidently called Poskoyac and Poscoyac. It is also shown as Fort Poscoyac on the map of the North-West Part of Canada, Hudson's Bay, and Indian Territories, drawn by Thomas Devine by order of the Honourable Joseph Cauchon, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Toronto, March 1857.

Louis is another fort further up the river, which was found in a ruinous condition by the Scotch merchants in the first portion of the nineteenth century.

In 1743, the discoverer of the Great North-West had to succumb to the petty jealousies and infamous intrigues of the very men who should have helped along every one of his moves. After giving the best years of his life to a work of discovery and settlement heretofore unequalled, disgusted with the unjust treatment of his enemies, he asked to be relieved of the responsibilities which had caused him nothing but anxiety and criticism.

His successor, Captain Charles Joseph Fleurimont de Noyelle, if he did not like exerting himself, had at least the good sense to call to his assistance the sons of the explorer. This is how they are found still on the work for several years after the retirement of their father. De Noyelle even suggested to Governor de Beauharnois to send him the Sieur de Lavérendrye, but the governor's recall prevented the execution of this plan. The Marquis de la Galissonière, who succeeded de Beauharnois, shared his predecessor's views on the impossibility for explorers to accomplish very much without government assistance, but his appeals were no better heeded. Fatigued of a position for which he did not feel any aptitude, de Noyelle resigned in 1749. La Jonquière, who had succeeded la Galissonière, thought immediately of re-appointing Lavérendrye, to whom public recognition had at last been accorded in 1746 by his tardy promotion to a captaincy in the colonial service, and, that same year (1749), by a knighthood of St. Louis. The aged explorer accepted without hesitation and prepared his plans, but instead crossed the great threshold of eternity, his dream unrealised. He died December 6, 1749, and was interred in the vault of Notre Dame, at Montreal.

No better panegyric of the great discoverer can be made than to transcribe the words that Governor de Beauharnois wrote October 27, 1744, to the French Minister of Colonies: "Six years of service in France, thirty-two in this colony, without any cause for reproach, and nine wounds, were

On the Saskatchewan at the Pas

motives that could not make me hesitate to propose him for one of the vacant companies." [1] Alas, not until it was too late had the king and his ministers "been brought to see the purity of his motives and the genuineness of his patriotism." [2]

Lavérendrye's sons would have liked to continue and, if possible, to accomplish his mission. But greed had to be reckoned with. Le Gardeur de St. Pierre was appointed instead, and Chevalier de Niverville was sent to the Saskatchewan. The latter gentleman established Fort La Jonquière (Calgary) in 1751, and, it is believed, died at Fort Poskoyac in 1753. In August 1763, Saint Pierre handed over the command of the western posts to Captain Louis Luc de la Corne St. Luc, in accordance with instructions of the Marquis du Quesne, who had succeeded La Jonquière as governor of the colony.[3] De la Corne had been in the west for several years: in 1753 he had rebuilt Fort St. Louis and given it his name, which is in existence to this day. The same year he had explored the Carrot River valley and the following spring (1754) had seeded a few acres of land, thereby deserving to be called the first agriculturist of the Canadian West. The very year that he was appointed to the command of the posts, however, Canada passed under the rule of England and with him the explorations of the French came to an end. It was these explorations which, seventy years ago, threatened to create international trouble by giving rise to what is popularly known as the "54–40 or fight" movement across the border, its partisans claiming that in the Louisiana bargain the United States had acquired from Napoleon I. all the territory which had been discovered by the French: that therefore all the country south of the Pigeon River, the Saskatchewan River, and the latter's north branch, by right of discovery by the French, belonged to the Union. All of which shows that, after all, England was wise to placidly ignore all attempts aiming at the cancellation of the Hudson's Bay Company's charter which purported to give

[1] Margry, *op. cit.* vol. vi. p. 597. [2] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 268.
[3] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 281.

its members the right to possession of all the territory served by rivers flowing into Hudson Bay, and the lands adjacent thereto which they might discover, even if the stupidity of Captain Gordon was to result in the loss of Oregon, which had been jointly occupied by the Americans and the English.

CHAPTER IV

HENDRY—HEARNE

Anthony Hendry, a boy from the Isle of Wight, who had been outlawed for smuggling, and had fled to the bay, where he had entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, was, according to Andrew Graham of Severn, who made marginal notes on the young fellow's manuscript, the first Englishman who went inland and saw the Saskatchewan River. In 1754 he received the permission of Governor James Isham of York Fort to accompany a band of Assiniboines, under the command of Little Deer, to their country beyond the Great Unknown River. They started on June 26. The trip was made by the Hayes River, the Nelson River, Playgreen Lake, and Moose Lake. The Saskatchewan was reached at Fort Basquia, where French traders in occupation of the fort presumably built by Lavérendrye's sons and restored by de la Corne received the traveller from Hudson Bay courteously and gently, although expressing the intention of retaining him until de la Corne returned from Montreal. The story is best given in his own words: "On our arrival, two Frenchmen came to the waterside and in a very genteel manner invited me into their home, which I readily accepted. One of them asked me if I had any letter from my master, and where, on what design I was going inland. I answered I had no letter, and that I was sent to view the country, and intended to return in the spring. He told me the master and men were gone down to Montreal with the furs, and that they must detain me till their return. However, they were very kind, and at night I went to my tent and told Attickasish or Little Deer, my leader that had the charge of me, who smiled and said they dared not. I sent them two feet of tobacco, which was very acceptable to them." [1]

[1] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 119 *et seq.*

The next day the party proceeded south-west, going through Saskeram Lake, the Pasquia Hills, and the Carrot River valley which Hendry calls the Muskuty plains. Fifty miles up that stream the canoes were abandoned and the voyage was continued by land, much to the satisfaction of the Indians, who were tired of fish food, and hoped to soon be able to kill buffalo, in company with their native brothers, on horseback. They met the first bands on August 15; five days later they had reached the South Branch of the Saskatchewan, which they crossed somewhere about Clark's Crossing, and three days later the North Branch, probably between the mouth of Eagle Hill Creek and the Elbow. On September 8, Hendry writes: "I killed a bull buffalo, he was nothing but skin and bones. I took out his tongue and left the remains to the wolves, which were waiting around in great numbers. We cannot afford to expend ammunition on them. My feet are swelled with marching, but otherwise I am in perfect health. So expert are the natives buffalo hunting, they will take an arrow out of the buffalo when the beasts are foaming and raging and tearing the ground up with their feet and horns. The buffalo are so numerous, like herds of English cattle, that we are obliged to make them sheer out of our way."[1] The Indian companions of the Hudson's Bay Company's man were killing quite a number each day, keeping the best portions and throwing the rest to the wolves.

Other big game was also found, and on September 17 Hendry writes: "Two young men were miserably wounded by a grizzly bear that they were hunting to-day. One may recover, but the other never can. His arm is torn from his body, one eye gouged out, and his stomach ripped open."[2]

Hendry's party were now three hundred miles south-west of the Pas: "I cannot describe the fineness of the weather and the pleasant country I am now in."[3] He was then in the country of the Blackfeet, about the Red Deer River, in modern Alberta. On October 14 he was taken to the main tribe of these Indians, occupying three hundred and twenty-

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 343. [2] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 343.
[3] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 344.

two tents, " pitched in two rows with an opening in the middle, where we were conducted to the leader's tent. The leader's tent was large enough to contain fifty persons. He received us seated on a buffalo skin attended by twenty elderly men. He made signs for me to sit down on his right hand, which I did. Our leaders set several great pipes going the rounds, and we smoked according to their custom. Not one word was spoken. Smoking over, boiled buffalo flesh was served in baskets of bent wood. I was presented with ten buffalo tongues. My guide informed the leader I was sent by the grand leader who lives on the great waters to invite his young men down with their furs. They would receive in return powder, shot, guns, and cloth. He made little answer: said it was far off and his people could not paddle. We were then ordered to depart to our tents, which we pitched a quarter of a mile outside their lines." [1] And the next day: " The chief told me his tribe never wanted food as they followed the buffalo, but he was informed the natives who frequented the settlements often starved on their journey, which was exceedingly true." [2]

Resuming their journey, Hendry and his Assiniboine friends turned north-west, and by the end of November, according to a note of Andrew Graham on the margin of the journal, were roaming over the Peace River or Lake Athabasca country by 59 degrees, although it is not likely that they were further north than the district between the present Edmonton and Battleford, as nowhere is it shown that they crossed any river of the importance of the North Saskatchewan again. The whole winter of 1754-55 was spent in this way. In the meantime Hendry had decided a goodly number of his native companions to fetch their furs down to York, and by spring several tribes joined him for that purpose. Having displayed his flag in honour of St. George on April 23, he made ready the same evening to return east. He could not leave, however, until the 28th, on which day the ice having completely cleared the Red Deer River to which he had returned, he launched his canoe and paddled down stream towards the

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 346. [2] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 346.

Saskatchewan which he soon reached, following it constantly afterwards. On May 23 he was at Fort à la Corne, a subordinate establishment to Basquia or Pasquia. "It is surprising," writes Hendry, "what an influence the French have over the natives. I am certain he (the officer in charge) hath got 1000 of the richest skins." Apparently the Frenchmen had secured the best furs from Hendry's Indians, and he had been unable to stop the bargain taking place. Six days later, he arrived at the Pas. De la Corne had returned, and Hendry was royally treated by him: but four days later, when the little fleet left for York Fort, the canoes contained nothing but the heavy furs: de la Corne and his men had secured what was left of the best. Following the same route as in his outward journey, he reached York Fort on June 20, 1755, having been absent six days short of one year.

The Hudson's Bay Company voted Hendry £20 gratuity for his voyage, but would not allow him to return inland. They even ridiculed certain parts of his reports: having never heard of Indians on horseback they would not believe that he had seen them. "They objected being told what they did not know. . . . He quit the service in disgust." [1]

The company believed enough of Hendry's story, however, to understand that the French were taking possession of the country south of the bay, as well as of the fur trade with the Indians of those regions. Asked by the young explorer to come and trade with the English at York Fort most of the natives that he had met had told him that they were satisfactorily served by the French at the Pas, and had refused to travel 500 miles further north to deal with new traders. Moses Norton, the half-Indian governor of Churchill, knew that even if the French were already on the Saskatchewan, north of this river there was an immense domain which so far had been touched by no white man. The company knew from the Chippewyan Indians that minerals abounded in the north, since they wore rough copper ornaments or used divers utensils made with that metal. An effort should be made to discover whence came the material out of which

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 352.

these objects were made. The North-West Passage, which had been so long sought by sea, should now be sought by land. And so Samuel Hearne, a mate of one of the company's sloops trading with the Eskimo, was commissioned in 1769 for an expedition to the new Promised Land. The advertised object of the journey was to find and determine the course of the far-off Metal River, as the Indians called what was to be known later as the Coppermine River, and settle once for all the vexed question of the existence of a North-West Passage: in reality, it is permissible to believe that the main purpose was to investigate a new field for the fur trade.

Equipped with instruments, ammunition, and supplies for two years, Hearne left Churchill, under salute of seven cannon, on November 6, 1769, accompanied by two English volunteers, two Cree Indian guides, and a party of Chippewyans or Northern Indians. His provisions having been plundered by his native associates before he had travelled 200 miles, he had to turn back, reaching the fort with his two white companions December 11.

The plucky explorer set forth again with a smaller party of Indians and no white men on February 23, 1770. This time he reached the Kazan River by about 63° 2′ north on June 30, and the northern end of Dubawnt Lake by the end of July. At this point his guides remonstrated with him about the impossibility of travelling further north that summer, and he had almost decided to winter with them. They, however, again plundered his store: added to this a gust of wind destroyed his quadrant: there was nothing left for the unfortunate Englishman but to return a second time to Churchill, his mission still unfinished.

He reached the fort November 25. Two weeks later, December 7, the courageous young man made a fresh start. On his way back to the fort he had met and formed a friendship with a famous Chippewyan chief named Matonabbee who asked to accompany him and suggested to take a few squaws with the party, as they were better accustomed to work and economy than the men. On December 30 they reached

Nueltin Lake; on February 6 they were on the Kazan River and three days later at Kasba Lake. They crossed Snowbird Lake on February 21, camped on Wholdaia Lake on March 2, and reached Clowey Lake in May. There they were joined by 200 Indians who, in spite of Hearne, decided to accompany the little party. After a month of rest, a dash for the Coppermine River across the barren lands was made. Peshew Lake was reached May 30, Kum Lake June 20. They were now well within the arctic circle as there was no night. Two days later the party met the Copper Indians with whom the calumet of peace was smoked. Leaving the women behind, the men pushed on, passed through a snow-storm on July 6, which made several Indians turn back, reached Grizzly Bear Hill two days later, on the 12th crossed a branch of the Coppermine, and the next day came to the main river 40 miles from its mouth. On July 16, to Hearne's horror, the Chippewyans, who had discovered an encampment of Eskimo, made a wholesale massacre of the poor natives, refusing to yield to his pleadings. "The poor, unhappy victims," writes Hearne, "were surprised in the midst of their sleep, and had neither time nor power to make any resistance; men, women, and children, in all upwards of twenty, ran out of their tents stark naked, and endeavoured to make their escape; but the Indians having possession of all the land side, to no place could they fly for shelter. One alternative only remained: that of jumping into the river; but, as none of them attempted it, they all fell a victim to Indian barbarity."[1] The site, which was visited by Franklin in 1821 and Hanbury in 1899, to this day is known as the Bloody Fall. The massacre haunted Hearne the rest of his life, although he was not responsible for it, and had done all in his power to stop it. Not even his friend Matonabbee would yield to his prayers and his tears.

The next day, July 17, Hearne stood on the shores of the Arctic Ocean at the mouth of the Coppermine River, "the first

[1] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 150. "This wanton massacre had such an effect upon the Eskimo that when David T. Hanbury visited the Coppermine in 1899 it was still talked of."—*Ibid.* p. 151.

white man to witness the tossing ice floes of that green, lone, paleocrystic sea."[1]

After erecting a mark to take formal possession of the country on behalf of the company which he was representing, Hearne on July 18 retreated up the Coppermine River about twenty miles, to examine the much-talked-of copper mines. These were rather disappointing, being "nothing but a jumble of rocks and gravel": a piece of ore weighing about four pounds he brought back with him to Fort Churchill.

Retracing his course as far as Cogeal Lake, Hearne turned south by west, reaching, on December 24, Great Slave Lake which he crossed in the vicinity of Reindeer Islands; on the south shore he found vast herds of buffalo. In February he was in the Dubawnt country, on March 19 passed Large Pike Lake, on April 7 crossed the Theleaza River. On May 11 the party camped on a river supposed to empty into Dubawnt Lake. The snow shoes were discarded and the journey home was continued by canoe: May 30 saw the expedition on the Kazan River. On June 26 they reached Seal River and four days later they were home at Fort Churchill. The trip had lasted a little over eighteen months.

The North-West Passage had not been discovered, but instead a region half the size of modern Russia. "The continent of America," writes Hearne, "is much wider than many people imagine, particularly Robson, who thought that the Pacific Ocean was but a few days' journey from the west coast of Hudson's Bay. This, however, is so far from being the case that when I was at my greatest western distance, upward of 500 miles from Prince of Wales Fort, the natives, my guides, well knew that many tribes of Indians lay to the west of us, and they knew no end to the land in that direction, nor have I met with any Indians, either northern or southern, that ever had seen the sea to the westward." But speaking of the Rocky Mountains, about which Indians whom he had met had told him, he adds: "Beyond those mountains all rivers run to the westward."

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 373.

After voting their plucky explorer a substantial present in currency and assuring him the promotion of governor at the death of Norton, the Hudson's Bay Company hastened to organise and occupy the newly discovered territory, before the Montreal merchants, who had filled the forts on the Saskatchewan abandoned in 1763 by the successors of Lavérendrye, could have time to penetrate so far north.

Directly after the cession of Canada to England, British traders had begun to move west. As early as 1761 Alexander Henry had reached Fort Michilimakinac, and a few years later had been on the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan trading with the Indians almost simultaneously with James Finlay and Thomas Curry. The "Bourgeois du Nord-Ouest," as they were called in Montreal, were therefore seriously threatening the supremacy of the Hudson's Bay Company in a country which it was wont to claim as its sole domain. In May 1773 it was decided to send Samuel Hearne to establish a fort at Basquia on the Saskatchewan River to counteract "the interruptions to the trade from the Canadian pedlars." Hearne, instead of stopping and establishing his post at the Pas, went further up the river and built Cumberland House on Pine Island Lake, also called Pigeon Lake, within 500 yards of the fort built in 1772 by Thomas and Joseph Frobisher, two other merchants from Montreal. Hearne had immediately noticed that this was a strategic point of first importance; situated, as it was, where all watercourses connected with the Churchill River, it commanded the approaches to and from the four points of the compass. There and then began the well-known conflict, bloody at times, between the old company and its competitors, the Montreal merchants. The building of Cumberland House was "to become a thorn in the flesh of the Canadian traders and the turning-point in the career of the Hudson's Bay Company. Had they continued to remain inactive on the shores of the bay, there is no doubt that the North-West Company would before long have wrested from them the entire fur trade of the great west. The establishment of Cumberland House, and the consequent acceptance of the policy of interior

trading posts, gave to the Hudson's Bay Company a new lease of life."[1]

In 1775 Hearne, having been appointed governor of Fort Churchill, returned to the bay. In 1782 he surrendered it to the French Admiral La Pérouse without offering a semblance of resistance, in spite of the thick walls, heavy bastions, and numerous cannon with which it was protected. La Pérouse tried to pull down the ramparts, but had to finally resort to mine to destroy them. Mr. J. W. Tyrrell, who visited the ruins on November 3, 1893, thus depicts his impressions: "Not a tree or other sign of life could be seen on the long, low, snow-driven point of rock, but there in all its solitary, massive grandeur stood the remains of what had more than 100 years ago been a noble fortress.

"The construction of this fortification, which appears to have been planned by the English engineer, Joseph Robson, was commenced in the year 1743 by the Hudson's Bay Company, which was then, as now, carrying on fur-trading business in northern Canada. So large and expensive a fortification was built, probably, not so much for the protection of the company's interests as for the purpose of complying with a provision of its Royal Charter, which required that the country should be fortified.

"The building of the fort appears to have been carried on for many years under the direction of the famous Samuel Hearne, already referred to as having traversed the Barren Lands to the mouth of the Coppermine River. In a stone barrack within the fort, Hearne lived and carried on business for many years.

"The fortress was in the form of a square, with sides 316 feet long; at the corners were bastions, and on top of the massive stone walls, 20 feet in height by 30 feet in thickness at the base, were mounted forty-two guns. With such a defence one would suppose that Churchill should have been safe from attacking foes, but this does not seem to have been the case, for history informs us that on August 8, 1782, the gallant La Pérouse and his three vessels of war, with, it is

[1] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 162 *et seq.*

said, naught but scurvy-smitten crews, made their appearance before the much-amazed garrison of thirty-nine men, and demanded an unconditional surrender, which was granted without resistance, and the gates of the great stone fort thrown open to the invaders. Taking possession, they spiked and dismounted the guns, in places broke down the walls, burned the barracks, and sailed away to France with Hearne, his men, and all their valuable furs.[1]

"As La Pérouse left the fort so did we find it. For the most part the walls were still solid, though from between their great blocks of granite the mortar was crumbling. The guns spiked and dismounted were still to be seen lying about on the ramparts and among the fallen masonry. In the bastions, all of which were still standing, were to be seen the remains of wells and magazines, and in the centre of the fort stood the walls of the old building in which Hearne and his men had lived. The charred ends of roof-beams were still attached to its walls, where undecayed they had rested for the past 111 years."[2]

[1] Not before also taking York on August 21, in spite of the following note on a small cannon located in the museum portion of the Winnipeg Industrial Bureau, reading thus: "Old cannon, loaned by Mr. F. K. Herchmer. Dug out of the bottom of the Saskatchewan River near Cumberland at very low water. Supposed to have been used by the French adventurer (sic) La Pérouse when he made an unsuccessful (sic) attempt to capture York after taking Fort Prince of Wales, at the mouth of the Churchill River." Yet Umfreville, who was among the captured, had written: "The English governor surrendered without firing a gun." And this is how history is written in some quarters!

[2] *Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada*, p. 199 *et seq.*

Scene in Canada's Hinterland
The ruins of Fort Churchill in the background on the right
Photo by Capt. French of the R.N.W.M.P., 1914.

CHAPTER V

THE NORTH-WEST COMPANY—MACKENZIE—HENRY

The first important organisation formed to oppose the Hudson's Bay Company in its supposed monopoly of the fur trade in the Hudson Bay territory was called the North-West Company; the founder was Simon M'Tavish. Born in the Highlands of Scotland in 1750, he was a man of "enormous energy and decision of character."[1] From Montreal, he engaged in the fur trade immediately after the cession of Canada to England, and soon, with the Frobisher brothers, formed a combination which was later joined by John Gregory, William M'Gillivary, Roderick Mackenzie, Angus Shaw, Cuthbert Grant, Alexander M'Leod, and William Thorburn, who had previously been in the north-west as independent fur traders. The pourparlers which were commenced in 1783–84 resulted in 1795 in the formation of the North-West Company. In 1804, at the death of M'Tavish, better known among his partners as Le Marquis, the organisation had been completed on such an important basis that it had posts all the way from the Missouri to the Saskatchewan and the Peace River country, and even on Hudson Bay and the lower St. Lawrence.

M'Tavish, however, had become quite unpopular among a number of the partners on account of his dominating personality, and the same year as the North-West Company had been definitely organised in 1795, the malcontents had formed a company of their own, known, in the annals of the fur trade, as the X–Y Company. The backbone of the new concern was the powerful Montreal firm of Forsyth, Richardson and Company, and its leading spirit, although not a partner himself until 1801, was young Alexander Mackenzie, the explorer to be of the Mackenzie River. The X–Y Company followed the

[1] Bryce, *op. cit.* p. 116.

North-West Company into every district where the latter had established posts in Rupert's Land. On the death of M'Tavish, all enmities disappeared and a union took place under the leadership of Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

It is not the purpose of this work to tell the reader about the fur trade, of which he has no doubt had occasion to read considerably if he has taken the least interest in obtaining information about Western Canada, but rather in these first chapters to post him, in as few words as possible, as far as its early history is concerned, about the journeys and discoveries made in the days of the fur companies by members of those companies. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Alexander Henry the younger, and David Thompson, for this reason, deserve to retain our attention for a few pages.

In 1763 was born at Stornoway,[1] in the Island of Lewis on the west coast of Scotland, a child who was destined to give his name to one of the largest rivers on the American continent, Alexander Mackenzie. He came to Canada at the age of sixteen and entered the fur trade with John Gregory and Alexander Norman M'Leod. His first journey was to Detroit, where his employers, having remarked his keenness and daring, had sent him to guide a trading party. In 1785 he became a shareholder in the company, set out for the west and joined his cousin Roderick Mackenzie in the English (Churchill) River district to help him against one of the greatest men of the North-West Company in full course of organisation, William M'Gillivary. Instead, he had to take charge of the Athabasca district assigned to him when, after Pond's murder of John Ross, it had been found necessary to join the two elements which were trading in those regions besides the great Hudson's Bay Company. He was then twenty-four years of age. He at once decided to push out agents north of Lake Athabasca, in the Great Slave Lake and Peace River districts: Leroux and Boyer were the men who accepted the mission.

[1] And not Inverness as all encyclopædias have it. The explorer's grandson himself furnished the correct information to Dr. George Bryce.—*The Makers of Canada*, vol. v. pt. i. p. 10.

But even the life of a fur trader seemed too monotonous for the young Bourgeois.[1] He decided his cousin Roderick, who had returned to Lake Superior, to join him, and with his help built, in 1789, Fort Chippewyan on the south side of Lake Athabasca. By this time he had made up his mind to imitate Hearne, of whom he had heard, and to make a dash for the Arctic Ocean, but by another route than the Coppermine. The Indians had told him of a river as vast as the Saskatchewan: this he would follow.

He left on Wednesday, June 3, 1789. He had with him four French Canadians, two of whom were accompanied by their wives. They were François Barrieau or Bériault, Charles Doucette, Joseph Landry, and Pierre Delorme. The little party crossed Athabasca Lake and the next day reached the Peace River, at the spot where it changes its name to that of the Slave River. After running the upper rapids and portaging at the Décharge, d'Embarras, Mountain, and Pelican, besides a number of smaller falls, " boiling caldrons and whirling eddies," they reached Great Slave Lake on June 9, having covered 272 miles in less than a week. Having taken a well-deserved rest, and had a conference with the Yellow Knife Indians, Mackenzie left on June 25 for the north, under the leadership of a Yellow Knife guide. On June 30 they were on the Mackenzie River, going westward, with the Horn Mountains in sight on their left, and on July 1 met the Slave and Dog-Rib Indians who told them fabulous stories about the river which they were to explore. On July 2 they sighted the Rocky Mountains and the next day camped at the foot of " The Rock by the River Side." On the 5th they passed the mouth of the Great Bear River and its sea-green coloured water. New races of Indians were now met: the Hares, the Quarellers, etc. On the 10th Mackenzie found that he had reached 67° 47′ north latitude. The natives informed him he was close to the sea. This was sighted on July 12, and almost reached two days later, July 14. On July 16 the discoverer laconically remarks in his journal that they turned back. Why the expedition should have turned

[1] Nickname given to the partners of the fur companies of Montreal.

back when only a few miles remained to travel to be on tide water has never been satisfactorily explained.

The party started on its return voyage on July 16. The only point of Mackenzie's narrative which need stop our attention is that on August 2, when passing the mouth of the Bear River, the explorer noticed that the opposite side was on fire: it had been burning before him, and in all probability is still burning to-day, since in 1906 R. C. M'Connell, in his exploration in Yukon and Mackenzie basins, reports the same fact. It is supposed that the coal or lignite takes fire spontaneously on exposure to moist air. They reached Mountain River on August 14, the entrance to Great Slave Lake on August 20, and Fort Chippewyan on September 12. The whole journey had taken 102 days for 3000 miles.

The fears of his guides and the obstacles of nature had not been able to deter the young explorer one moment from his undertaking. It is true that he did not actually reach the Arctic Ocean, but he did enough to ascertain the course of the river to which he gave his name and assure himself, by observations and from conferences with the Indians, that there was much more land to discover before the Western Sea was reached.

After a voyage to Europe to perfect his scientific knowledge and to purchase suitable instruments, Mackenzie, on October 10, 1792, set out for his second and more important journey of discovery by way of the Peace River on which he had founded the Old Establishment in 1788, now in charge of Boyer. Of the six French Canadians who accompanied him on this trip, two had gone with him to the mouth of the Mackenzie River.

The party came to the mouth of the Smoky River on November 1. There it was decided to build winter quarters: these were completed for Christmas. As soon as spring opened, Mackenzie sent back, laden with the furs gathered in the winter, six canoes with as many men as he could spare to man them.

He and the other members of the little troop left for the unknown west on May 9, 1793: the same day they learned

from a band of Indians which they met that in ten days they would be at the foot of the Rocky Mountains: they actually came in view of these eight days later. At the same time the first cañon on the river was reached, and it was found necessary to portage canoes, provisions, and other supplies for three leagues. On the last day of the month they reached the forks of the river. Turning up the south branch or Parsnip River, the following day they passed the mouth of the Nation River and that of the Pack River. On June 9 two Sikamis Indians made friends with the explorers and furnished them with considerable information about the river to which they were to portage to reach the ocean: one of the two natives was induced to guide the party, but it was soon found that he knew very little to act in this capacity. Three days later Mackenzie and his companions were at the source of the Parsnip, which the explorer mistook for "the highest and southernmost source of the Peace River," which is to be found instead at the headwaters of the Finlay River. A small portage of 817 paces was sufficient to take the party to the Fraser River: this was the "great divide" between the two river systems of the Arctic and the Pacific.

Coming down the river, the party passed the mouth of the Nechaco River without seeing it. On June 21 they met a band of Carrier Indians who informed them that they should have followed another small river farther up to reach the Western Sea, as the river they were on emptied into the ocean considerably to the south, also that they were six days' march from the sea overland: Mackenzie immediately decided upon the dash across the country. Having cached part of their provisions, the explorer and his men set out on the last lap of the journey to the sea, over hill and vale, through woods and swamps, on July 4. Two days later they fell in with the great road to the sea on the north bank of the Blackwater River, which they crossed on the 10th. On the 17th the Bella Coola was reached and, with the help of friendly coast Indians who placed their canoes and themselves at their service, three days later the small expedition at last found itself on salt water.

Continuing his journey along the coast for two days, Mackenzie arrived at Vancouver's cascade canal: with a mixture of vermilion and melted grease he wrote the memorable date on a rock: "Alexander Mackenzie from Canada, by land, 22 July, 1793."

Returning home by the same road, he reached Fort Chippewyan on August 24. The journey had lasted 318 days. Of the difficulties of the trip, of the terror expressed time and again by Mackenzie's voyageurs, of the many dangers of destruction by the native tribes, although nothing has been said here, it would be incorrect to think that such did not exist. On the contrary, when reading through the narrative of Canada's greatest explorer one is amazed at the decision and fortitude which made him surmount the greatest hardships and sustain his companions through the worst trials that imagination can picture to itself.

"From the wider standpoint, knowledge was supplied as to the country lying between the two great oceans, and while it did not, as we know from the voyages seeking a North-West Passage in this century, lay the grim spectre of an Arctic channel, yet it was a fulfilment of Verendrye's dream, and to Alexander Mackenzie, a Canadian bourgeois, a self-made man, aided by his Scotch and French associates, had come the happy opportunity of discovering 'La Grande Mer de l'Ouest.'"[1]

The distinguished discoverer returned to his native land in 1795, and there wrote the tale of his stupendous achievements: his book was published in 1801. A copy was smuggled into France at the bid of Napoleon I.

After a few years' public life in Lower Canada, where he had returned, he moved again to Scotland, where he died on March 12, 1820, at Mulnain in Perthshire.

As to Alexander Henry,[2] he had been in the service of the North-West Company since 1792. In 1799 he went up from Montreal by the usual canoe route to the west side of Lake Manitoba, and for nine years made several trips between

[1] Bryce, *op. cit.* p. 131.

[2] The younger.

Lake Superior and Pembina, where he had erected a fort. It was in May 1808 that Henry turned his face toward the Saskatchewan. Leaving the mouth of the Red River in August, he followed the west side of Lake Winnipeg to the Grand Rapids, where, on the 20th, he met David Thompson on his way to the Columbia. Passing the Pas on August 24, he reached Cumberland House two days later, but remained only until sunset. On September 2 he was at the forks, the next day at Fort Providence, near the site of the modern city of Prince Albert, and on the 4th at Hudson House, a few miles below Carlton House. Pursuing his voyage, Henry camped at the mouth of the Battle River, past Fort Vermilion where he wintered. The following year, after a trip down to Fort William, he reached Fort Augustus (Edmonton) on October 30, and returned to Vermilion, where he again wintered. This he abandoned the following spring to establish the White Earth House, where Thompson visited him on his way back from the Columbia. In September 1810, Henry went as far as Rocky Mountain House. In February 1811 he left on a "jaunt in the Rocky Mountains," reaching the upper end of the Kootenay on the fourth day: entering Howse Pass, he reached what he presumed was "the highest source of the Saskatchewan," then returned to White Earth House by the same route as he had travelled on his way up. After two years spent in the Saskatchewan country, he made a second trip to the Rocky Mountains, presumably going through Athabasca Pass and following the all-Columbian route.

His career was abruptly closed by drowning in company with Donald M'Tavish of the North-West Company and several others on their way from Fort George to the company's boat, the *Isaac Toad*, on May 22, 1814.

"He was not a great explorer in the sense that Alexander Mackenzie and David Thompson were; he made no such remarkable discoveries as are associated with their names; but he was an untiring traveller, and what is much to the point, he travelled with his eyes wide open, and noted in his voluminous journals everything that aroused his interest.

His journals are essential to a full understanding of the course of exploration in North-Western America." [1]

For this reason we have thought proper of giving a short summary of Henry's voyages on the Saskatchewan River, which he knew so well, from its mouth to its higher source.

[1] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 408.

A York Boat at the Pas

CHAPTER VI

THOMPSON—FRASER—FRANKLIN

To sum up in a few pages the forty-five volumes of manuscript that David Thompson, the discoverer of the Columbia River, took sixty-six years to write may hardly be considered an easy task. For this reason our readers need not expect here a full account of the several journeys that this famous explorer accomplished from the day that he entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, at fourteen, in 1784, to the time of his death at the ripe old age of eighty-seven years. Our intention is to follow him only on his journeys of exploration on the Columbia and Kootenay Rivers, which have been most instrumental in placing his name before the world as that of one of the greatest travellers of modern times.

Thompson was born in the parish of St. John's, Westminster, England, and was educated at the Blue Coat School in London. Entering the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1784, he began at Fort Churchill, in that year, the first of his voluminous journals; the last one was to be written in 1850. During the thirteen years that he remained with the company, he carried on explorations and surveys of the Nelson, Churchill, and Saskatchewan Rivers. In 1797, the company having refused his request to prosecute explorations further west, he passed over to the North-West Company, who immediately gave him the appointment of astronomer and surveyor. For his new employers he explored the upper waters of the Assiniboine and Mississippi, portions of those of the Missouri, Athabasca, and Peace Rivers, and again the Saskatchewan and the Churchill.

Thompson had been surveying for some years in the Rocky Mountains, when, on May 10, 1807, he left Rocky Mountain House on horseback, following the north bank of the Sas-

katchewan. On June 3 he was on the Kootenay plains and on the 6th at the forks. It took him until the 22nd to prepare for his journey across the mountains. That day he reached the summit, and a few miles south the upper waters of the Blaeberry River, which he descended to the Upper Columbia on June 30. A few days later he was building Fort Kootenay on the west side of the Columbia, where he was to winter. Continuing his explorations the following spring, he finally reached the source of the mighty river in Upper Columbia Lake. A two-mile portage took him to the Kootenay River, which he decided to follow. On April 24 he passed the mouth of St. Mary's River. On May 6 he was at Kootenay Falls, on the 13th at the mouth of the Moyie River, and the next day at Kootenay Lake. Then he returned up the river and followed the Moyie River on horseback and rejoined the Kootenay about the mouth of St. Mary's River on May 18. Crossing the Kootenay he ascended its right bank to Fort Kootenay, which he reached June 5. With his winter's crop of furs he returned to Rocky Mountain House on June 24, descended the Saskatchewan River to Cumberland House on July 9, and reached Rainy Lake House on August 2.

The same fall he again crossed the mountains, ascended the Columbia to the mouth of the Spilimichene River, caused a post to be established at Kootenay Falls, and himself wintered at Kootenay Fort.

In the spring of 1809 he once more crossed the mountains and paddled down the Saskatchewan to Fort Augustus (Edmonton). Returning he met Mr. Howse of the North-West Company, after whom he renamed Saskatchewan Pass. Having reached the Columbia he crossed the Cabinet Range to Pend d'Oreille Lake, where he built Kullyspell House; explored the Pend d'Oreille River, the Columbia River well into what is now the State of Washington, and the Kootenay River. In November he built Salush House where he wintered.

In the following spring he again started north by the Kootenay and Columbia, making Howse Pass on June 18, descended the Saskatchewan, noticed the ruins of Fort Augustus, which

the Blackfeet had destroyed, and met Alexander Henry at White Earth River Fort. On July 4 he was at Cumberland House, and on the 22nd at Rainy Lake. On September 6 he was back at White Earth River Fort. The Piegans Indians having obstructed the Howse Pass, Thompson decided to find a new way into the mountains by Athabasca Pass. On October 29 he started on what was to prove his most arduous journey: dangers of starvation, death from freezing, fatigue from natural obstacles of all kinds, caused his men to almost rebel. However, in the first week of November he was at Pembina River, and on December 1 on the Athabasca, his provisions almost exhausted. Some of his men went hunting while others busied themselves with making sledges and snow-shoes, and others again went overland to Rocky Mountain House for provisions, dogs, and horses. There Henry gave them what he could spare. Thompson started out on December 29, determined to reach the Columbia against odds. On January 18, 1810, he was on the banks of that river and, had it not been for his dispirited companions, would have pushed at once to Kootenay House.

In the spring of 1811 Thompson resumed his explorations on the Columbia and Kootenay Rivers, reached on June 15 Spokane House, probably built by him some time before about where the city of Spokane now stands, descended the Spokane River to the Columbia, which he ascended to Kettle Falls; started down the Columbia, and on July 9, 1811, reached the mouth of the Snake River, five years after the passage of Lewis and Clark: this did not prevent him from taking possession of the territory in the name of Great Britain. Thompson reached Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia River on July 15 or 16.

On his way home he passed the mouth of the Willamette (near the site of the present city of Portland) on July 24, continued up the Columbia through the Arrow Lakes to Boat Encampment at the mouth of Canoe River, which he reached in the beginning of October, having achieved his greatest work.

After a few more explorations of lesser importance he left the north-west the following year (1812), and for ten years

from 1816 was engaged in surveying and defining the international boundary. He also carried out several minor surveys in what is now Eastern Canada. He died at Longueil, near Montreal.

"The world can never be allowed to forget the discoverer of the sources of the Columbia, the first white man who ever voyaged on the upper reaches and main upper tributaries of that mighty river, the pathfinder of more than one way across the Continental Divide from Saskatchewan to Columbian waters, the greatest geographer of his day in British America, and the maker of what was then by far its greatest map."[1]

Among other famous explorers in Northern America may be mentioned Simon Fraser, another partner of the North-West Company, who lived between 1776 and 1862. He was chosen in 1805 for the new field beyond the Rocky Mountains, when the company decided to carry its operations in that territory. Having established trading posts in modern northern British Columbia, he explored the river which bears his name. In 1811 he was promoted to the charge of the Red River department. He declined the knighthood offered him as a recognition of his services in the cause of exploration. He was present at the Seven Oaks affair. He retired from the fur trade about the time the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-West Company joined forces.

In later years and nearer to our days Sir John Franklin (1786-1847) headed the overland expedition of 1819-1822, from York Factory by way of Great Slave Lake to the mouth of the Coppermine River and the Arctic coast, and that of 1825-27 to the same part of the continent. In 1845, he started on a third expedition by sea to make the North-West Passage: his ships were caught in the ice jams of Victoria Strait, and with all his men he perished in the attempt to reach one of the remote northern posts of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Although the relations of the several discoveries and journeys which precede may not appear to be altogether germane to the subject of this book, we have judged necessary to briefly

[1] Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 559.

Mode of Travelling in Northern Manitoba's Hinterland
R.N.W.M. Policemen leaving the Pas for Roe's Welcome (600 miles north of the Pas), 1912

review them in order to all the better impress upon the mind of the reader the importance of the Saskatchewan and Hudson Bay routes, which for so many years were followed, at some time or other of their voyages, by the many explorers, some of whom we have followed together. From Lavérendrye to Franklin, every one of these celebrated men found it necessary to travel by way of the Saskatchewan, which, as every one knows, is none other but one of the main feeders of the Nelson River, at the mouth of which, in a few years hence, will be found, in the very centre of Western Canada, Manitoba's first seaport and one of Canada's greatest inland commercial harbours, Port Nelson.

CHAPTER VII

SELKIRK

In a primitive country such as Rupert's Land was in the fur-trading days of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-West Company, with men bent upon making money fast without the restraint of law to fear, seeing on every side the ready products of the native trapper's thrift available for a small outlay, it may be readily imagined that rivalries between the competing big companies were such that it appeared a titan's work to set them at naught. Debauchery and crime were rampant, traceable to the doors of either company: the two murders committed by Peter Pond in Athabasca and the terrible circumstances which surrounded the death of Benjamin Frobisher at Cedar Lake may be cited as examples. Whoever had predicted then that the big corporations would soon unite would have been suspected of insanity.

Influenced by the philanthropic ideas of the French Revolution, which had just closed, there lived in those days in Edinburgh a young broad-minded nobleman, Thomas Douglas, Earl of Selkirk. In the company of Walter Scott and Robert Burns, he had acquired ideas and desires for the betterment of the rustic classes of Scotland and Ireland, which gradually but surely had led him to consider a scheme of emigration of these people to Canada, the ultimate results of which were to be, firstly, the cessation of hostilities between the two companies by the consolidation of both into one, in spite of Sir Alexander Mackenzie's opposition; secondly, the settlement of the three modern Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta as agricultural districts destined to be called, in less than half a century, the granary of the world. It is not often that historians, in their labours, come across as noble a figure and as deserving a character as were the attributes of

Lord Selkirk, the founder of the Red River Colony. To Lavérendrye and to him the sculptor's chisel should be immediately requisitioned to carve in marble the first two western statues, to perpetuate their names and deeds in the minds of the rising generation which is to benefit so immensely by their virtues so true and noble.

The scope of this book does not permit referring otherwise than in passing to the initial work of Lord Selkirk in Canada: his Prince Edward Island Colony, his first visits to Canada and the United States, his Baldoon Settlement near Lake St. Clair, and his Moulton Colony near the mouth of the Grand River in Upper Canada. Even his several important visits to Montreal, which served to confirm him in the intention which he had previously had of establishing a settlement in Rupert's Land, as evidenced by his memorial of April 4, 1802, to Lord Pelham, Home Secretary, can only be touched upon, as must also the fact that, during these visits, he shrewdly availed himself of the several entertainments given him by the partners of the North-West Company to obtain as much information as possible about the resources of the wonderful country he heard them speak about and longed to visit.

Attractive as it may have looked to him, the fur trade did not interest the young nobleman so much as the philanthropic desire of helping his poor countrymen to create homes for themselves and their descendants in a new country where agriculture appeared to have more chance to develop into something substantial than the mere fur trade, the whole craze of those days.

By the year 1810 Lord Selkirk had matured a plan to realise his project of a colony in the Hudson Bay Territory. He had consulted distinguished lawyers on the validity of the Hudson's Bay Company's charter, and ascertained that its title to land was as good as that of any landlord in England. His next step had been to purchase a controlling interest in the company, and buy from it a tract of 110,000 square miles of land in the Red River Valley. Alexander Mackenzie, John Inglis, and Edward Ellice, three Nor'Westers who had purchased £2500 of stock in the company for the purpose of

defeating the coloniser's ends, were unable to thwart the skilfully planned schemes which, unawares, they had helped to realise when entertaining the young lord in their Montreal palatial homes and clubs.

Lord Selkirk's next step was to present his plan to the prospective emigrant: he undertook to provide transportation, means of livelihood for a time, and to give free lands. In Upper Canada he had formed a friendship with a young United Empire Loyalist, Captain Miles Macdonell: he offered to put him in charge of the colony. This was accepted. In spite of strenuous opposition on the part of Sir Alexander Mackenzie and the latter's friends, on July 26, 1811, the first contingent of settlers left Stornoway for York Factory, where it arrived on September 24. It was then too late in the season to ascend the Nelson River: the party had to winter on the bay, and only in the following spring could they start for the Red River, which they reached only in the fall, having found the route a hard and trying one, with its numerous rapids and portages.

They settled at the forks, where the beautiful city of Winnipeg stands to-day.

The second and third parties came in 1813. Two years later the unfortunate Semple brought a fourth contingent. That same year Lord Selkirk landed in Montreal with Lady Selkirk, their son, and two daughters. Hearing[1] that his colony on the Red River was being seriously interfered with by the Nor'Westers, who could not be reconciled to the idea that the old hunting and trapping grounds should be turned into farms, he appealed to Lord Bathurst, British Secretary of State, and Sir Gordon Drummond, Governor of Lower Canada, for redress.

"In entering upon this transaction (the sale of the Red River lands to Lord Selkirk) the Hudson's Bay Company,

[1] The man who risked his life to take the news to Lord Selkirk from Red River to Montreal was Jean Baptiste Lagimodière, grandfather of Louis Riel, the famous Métis chieftain. Asked by Lord Selkirk what he wished in return for the service he had rendered him, Lagimodière could not think of anything better than priests to impart to his young wife, Marie Anne Gaboury, the first white woman of the Red River district, the consolations of religion.

Farming Land along Nelson River

Photo by Dr. W. Sinclair, 1914.

submitted the complainant, had no reason to suppose that the intended establishment would meet with any peculiar difficulties. The country on Red River, where it was to be formed, had been frequented by the servants of the company for a long course of years; and they were in the habits of the most friendly intercourse with the natives. The district had been much exhausted of valuable furs, so that the trading posts in it had proved of late years unprofitable and doubts had been entertained whether they ought to be continued: and the Indians had, on various occasions, expressed much anxiety lest the Hudson's Bay Company should abandon the posts from which they had so long been accustomed to receive their supplies of British manufactures. It was not, therefore, supposed that they would object to an establishment, calculated to secure them permanently from such apprehension; and there is no reason to believe that any dissatisfaction would have existed on their part, if it had not been industriously fomented."[1]

But the power in Montreal was in the hands of the Nor'-Westers or their friends: the secretary and the governor took no notice. Lord Selkirk was reduced to organise a private expedition at his own expense. Early in June 1816 the De Meurons' Regiment started for the west under the personal leadership of Lord Selkirk himself. The winter was spent in camp at Pointe de Meuron, near Fort William. In June 1817 the party was at the Red River. A settlement of the troubles, in which blood had been shed at the Seven Oaks affair, was arrived at, and his lordship returned to Montreal. Before parting with his colonists he took the trouble to meet the chiefs of the different tribes and passed with them a treaty, the good results of which are lasting to this day.

Lord Selkirk was not a little astonished, on his arrival at Montreal, to find that his enemies had preceded him and denounced him to the authorities. He bravely faced the charges of theft, riot, assault, resistance, and conspiracy laid against him by the North-West Company, paid the unjust

[1] End of Lord Selkirk's statement, *Red River Settlement Papers*, 1819–58.

fines in which he was mulcted, himself brought charges against his accusers for the murder of Governor Semple and for theft, and, to his disgust, found that he had failed on all counts.

Utterly discouraged by the evident unjust treatment received at the hands of judges, the tools of a powerful organisation, he returned to Scotland in 1818. The mental torture to which he had been subjected seriously affected his health. The father of the first agricultural colony in Western Canada, which has now extended to the Rocky Mountains, died a young man of forty-nine years, at Pau, in the south of France.

The following year the two big companies, realising that conflicts of the sort which had caused the bloody affair of Seven Oaks could only result in the destruction of both companies, decided to bury old feuds and form a union: this took place on March 26, 1821: the old familiar name of the Hudson's Bay Company was retained, with Governor Simpson at the head of affairs.

CHAPTER VIII

HUDSON BAY AND STRAIT

APART from the many difficulties existing only in the imagination of certain writers and their readers, for the most part interested in seeing things in the worst light, the main dangers supposed or reported to attend navigation by the Hudson Bay route are two-fold, viz., ice jams in the strait and local attraction resulting in the inaccuracy of the compass.

Of the latter little need be said as science will soon find a way to explain and combat the trouble; it seems nothing more than an ordinary problem of mathematics to solve: once the medium deviation will have been found, it should be easily rectified. For this purpose, in the summer of 1912, W. E. Jackson, a magnetic expert from the Meteorological Office at Toronto, who had accompanied Captain Bernier in the cruise of the Arctic in 1908-9, was chosen by the Federal Government to take a trip to Hudson Bay on the *Burleigh*, with a mission to thoroughly study the deviations in compass and magnetic conditions generally. Where the boats of the Hudson's Bay Company have sailed for almost two centuries and a half without lights and bell buoys, it would seem that this difficulty is not serious enough to warrant the pusillanimous fear which is expressed in some quarters. And with the opening of the route for practical uses it may reasonably be expected that men of science, finding it relatively easy to study the trouble on the spot, will rediscover what Laurent Ferrer Maldonado, the Spanish navigator of the sixteenth century, had discovered in his days and laid before the Council of the Indies in his country, namely, a plan to render the magnetic needle unaffected by merely local conditions, as well as his second plan of finding longitude at sea has perhaps been applied from his data.[1] Possibly before this difficulty of the

[1] *Epitome de la Biblioteca Oriental y Occidental, Nautica y Geographica.* Madrid, 1629.

variation of the compass is conquered, if the new gyroscope compass is not sufficient, accidents in which good men will be sacrificed to the requirements of progress will be heard of: a few boats ill-directed in their course by skippers unfamiliar with the conditions prevailing in the waters of Canada's great inland sea may go aground, and many a brave sailor may find a premature grave in the icy waters of Hudson Bay; but we must not forget that the betterment of every great invention has met, and is still meeting, at some day or other with terrible happenings, and that " the lintel of every doorway to advancement is ever marked with some blood sacrifice." [1] In this age of automobiles and flying machines, surely a little matter like the danger arising from the uncertainty to which mariners on Hudson Bay may be subjected at the start on account of the impossibility to trust to the seaman's now admitted indispensable guide, the compass, will not be found a sufficient deterrent where other conditions are present. What has been done before the days of Marco Polo may be done again.

Undoubtedly the greatest difficulties in connection with the Hudson Bay route lie in the strait, and for this reason every impartial student of the problem should give this point a good deal of his attention before claiming, as so many are apt to do who do not go fully into the matter, either that the passage is practicable at all times or that it is never safe.

Hudson Strait, from the Atlantic Ocean to Hudson Bay, between Ungava Bay and the Upper Narrows, Labrador, and Baffin's Land, is 450 miles. Its widest breadth is 100 miles. It contracts at three points, varying between 35 and 45 miles. The first point at the eastern entrance is to be found between Resolution and Button Islands, the second westward south of Big Island, and the third south of Nottingham Island. Miss Agnes C. Laut, whose several books on Western Canada read as works of fiction, so well has the gentle writer mastered the English language, describes thus Hudson Strait:

" Hudson Strait opens from the Atlantic between Resolution Island on the north and the Button Islands on the south. From point to point, this end of the strait is 45 miles wide.

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* p. 313.

At the other end, the west side, between Digges' Island and Nottingham Island, is a distance of 35 miles. From east to west, the straits are 450 miles long—wider at the east where the south side is known as Ungava Bay, contracting at the west to the Upper Narrows. The south side of the strait is Labrador; the north, Baffin's Land. Both sides are lofty, rocky, cavernous shores lashed by a tide that rises in places as high as 35 feet, and runs in calm weather 10 miles an hour. Pink granite islands dot the north shore in groups that afford harbourage, but all shores present an adamant front, edges sharp as a knife or else rounded hard to have withstood and cut the tremendous ice jam of a floating world suddenly contracted to 40 miles, which Davis Strait pours down at the east end and Fox Channel at the west.

" Seven hundred feet is considered a good-sized hill; 1000 feet, a mountain. Both the north and the south sides of the straits rise 2000 feet in places. Through these rock walls ice has poured and torn and ripped a way since the ice age preceding history, cutting a great channel to the Atlantic. Here, the iron walls suddenly break to secluded, silent valleys, moss-padded, snow-edged, lonely as the day earth first saw light. Down these valleys pour the clear streams of the eternal snows, burnished as silver against the green, setting the silence echoing with the tinkle of cataracts over some rock wall, or filling the air with the voice of many waters at noon-tide thaw. One old navigator—Coates—describes the beat of the angry tide at the rock base and the silver voice of the mountain brooks, like the treble and bass of some great cathedral organ sounding its diapason to the glory of God in this peopleless wilderness.

" Perhaps the kyacks of some solitary Eskimo, lashed abreast twos and threes to prevent capsizing, may shoot out from some of these bog-covered valleys like sea birds; but it is only when the Eskimos happen to be hunting here, or the ships of the whalers and fur traders are passing up and down, that there is any sign of human habitation on the straits.

" Walrus wallow on the pink granite in huge herds. Polar bears flounder from icepan to icepan. The arctic hare, white

as snow but for the great bulging black eye, bounds over the boulders. Snow buntings, whistling swans, snow geese, ducks in myriads—flacker and clacker and hold solemn conclave on the adjoining rocks, as though this were their realm from the beginning and for all time.

"Of a tremendous depth are the waters of the straits. Not for nothing has the ice world been grinding through this narrow channel for billions of years. No fear of shoals to the mariner. Fear is of another sort. When the ice is running in a whirlpool and the incoming tide meets the ice jam and the waters mount thirty-five feet high and a wind roars between the high shores like a bellows—then it is that the straits roll and pitch and funnel their waters into black troughs where the ships go down. 'Undertow' the old Hudson's Bay captains called the suck of the tide against the ice-wall; and that black hole where the lumpy billows seemed to part like a passage between wall of ice and wall of water was what the mariners feared. The other great danger was just a plain crush, getting nipped between two icepans rearing and plunging like fighting stallions, with the ice blocks going off like pistol-shots or smashed glass. No child's play is such navigating either for the old sailing vessels of the fur traders or the modern ice-breakers propelled by steam! *Yet the old sailing vessels and the whaling fleets have navigated these straits for two hundred years.*" [1]

Hudson Strait never freezes over and the official expedition of 1903 under the command of Mr. A. P. Low has "established the important fact of two open currents always flowing in the straits, one along the north shore, in and westward, bearing the ice drift of Greenland, so that ships entering could go with the ice drive; one along the south shore, outward, bearing the raft ice of Hudson's Bay, so that the ships going to sea could also go with the ice drift. In both cases, therefore, it was found that the ships could navigate the strait with the ice drift, not against it." [2]

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* p. 303 *et seq.* *See* Appendix B for description by A. P. Low, F.R.G.S.

[2] Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review*, 1907, p. 148.

A Missionary Encampment at Fort Churchill, 1911

Photo by The Bishop Charlebois of the Pas.

In his report of the cruise of the Arctic, 1908-9, Captain Bernier gives a summary of the several Canadian expeditions which have been made in Hudson Bay and Strait since 1884. A very good opinion of the conditions in those waters may be formed from this summary which is reproduced here *in extenso:*

"EXPEDITION UNDER COMMANDER A. R. GORDON, IN 1884

"The expedition of Commander Gordon left Halifax on July 22, 1884, in the *Neptune*, a chartered steamer, accompanied by a number of observers and Robert Bell, M.D., G.G.R.S., geologist and medical officer. The *Neptune* arrived off the entrance of Hudson Strait on August 3. The different observing officers were left at their respective stations, namely, Port Burwell, Skynner's Cove, Ashe Inlet, Stupart's Bay, Laperriere, and Port de Boucherville. From the last-named station the *Neptune* first went to Chesterfield Inlet and from there south to Marble Island, from there to Churchill, from Churchill to York Factory, lying between the mouths of the Nelson and Hayes Rivers. She returned to Digges Island, opposite Cape Wollstenholme, from that point returning pretty much by the same route as she went out, with the exception of keeping farther out to sea, and landing at St. John's, Newfoundland, where the *Neptune* was owned. On this voyage, observations of the currents of Hudson Strait were made, the rise and fall of the tide, and the velocity of the tides at the different stations mentioned above, and also at Port Churchill. The temperature of the sea in Hudson Strait and Hudson Bay was taken, and some description given in Gordon's narrative of the resources of Hudson Bay and Strait. His narrative also contained a brief description of the inhabitants, the Esquimaux, and of the fauna. Dr. Robert Bell, the geologist and naturalist, furnished a lengthy report upon the examination of the geological features of the shores of the strait and the bay, visited by the *Neptune*, and some general remarks on glaciation.

" The *Neptune* was a chartered vessel, and was delivered to the owners at St. John's, Newfoundland, October 18, 1884.

Expedition under Commander A. R. Gordon, in 1885

" The second expedition of Lieutenant A. R. Gordon was made in 1885, in the *Alert*, the vessel used by Sir George Nares in 1876 in his Arctic expedition under the British Admiralty. Lieutenant Gordon left Halifax on May 27, 1885, and proceeded to the entrance of Hudson Strait, but did not get any farther than Resolution Island, where damage was done to the stem of his vessel. He steered for St. John's, Newfoundland, to have repairs made, again returning to the entrance of Hudson Strait. He called at the different stations established in 1884, and took on board the men with their instruments for observation, and again crossed the bay to Churchill, where he took up the soundings of the previous year for the purpose of making a plan of Churchill Harbour. The object of the trip was exactly the same as that of the voyage of 1884, but the report on the voyage contains information obtained by the observers that remained the year in the strait, and their notes relating to the movements of the ice, and general observations.

" Dr. Bell accompanied Lieutenant Gordon on this trip, pursuing his search for economic minerals or evidences of them, and the study of the general geological formation of the country. Magnetic observations were also made by Mr. Stupart, and absolute determinations were made at the Toronto Observatory.

Expedition under Commander A. R. Gordon, in 1886

" Commander Gordon, in his voyage of 1886, followed instructions to proceed to the mouth of Hudson Strait on July 3, pushed through the strait, calling at some of the

stations established in 1884. He crossed the bay from Cape Southampton to Churchill and arrived in the harbour on July 29. Some time was employed in making a survey of Churchill Harbour. The plan prepared by Gordon shows the soundings noted in fathoms at low water. Outside the entrance of the harbour, the depth was from 9 to 13 fathoms, decreasing until opposite the Hudson Bay warehouse it was 5 fathoms. He visited the mouth of the Nelson River, and made soundings of Nelson Harbour, which are given in feet at low water. It was unsafe to take the ship nearer than about 13 miles from the mouth of the river. The soundings were accordingly made, in Nelson Harbour, in a boat. There is a channel from the Nelson River into the bay, but it is narrow and tortuous. The most direct line of soundings gives the depth from 6 feet near the shore to 33 feet at the ship. Between the ship's position and the last depth, the water measures from 12 to 14 feet; 14 feet only having been found a short distance from the ship. The voyage appears to have been made with comparative ease from Halifax to Churchill, Nelson and return. In 1886, Commander Gordon found the strait navigable about a month earlier than in 1885, and, in his conclusion respecting the season of navigation, takes into consideration the main question of the object of the expedition, namely, that practical commercial navigation in the straits can be kept up during July, August, September, and October.

" His reports were published separately, and also in the annual reports of the Department of Marine and Fisheries for the years 1884–5–6. He made some soundings in Churchill Harbour and prepared a map or plan of the harbour, showing the depth of water and the accommodation the harbour can afford vessels. He came to the conclusion that Churchill is a very much better place to load than the mouth of the Nelson River can possibly be made.

" Churchill is a natural harbour, where the tide rises 15 feet 5 inches at spring tide and 8 feet at neap tide. It is impossible to get within 12 miles of the mouth of the Nelson River with vessels drawing any depth of water. It was also ascertained

that silt and mud, brought down the river by freshets in the spring of the year, would fill up any artificial harbour that might be made at Nelson.

Expedition of Commander William Wakeham, in 1897

"The fourth expedition to Hudson Bay was made in 1897, under Commander Wakeham, of the Marine and Fisheries Department, in the steamship *Diana*. The expedition was for exactly the same purpose as the three voyages under Commander Gordon, namely, to ascertain more fully, if possible, the length of time which vessels engaged in commercial trade might navigate Hudson Bay and Strait. One special feature of the instructions given to Commander Wakeham was the direction to pass in and out of the strait as often as he could from the time of his first entrance. The *Diana* left Halifax on June 3, 1897, passing around the coast of Nova Scotia and through the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Strait of Belle Isle, and coasting along Labrador. She met very heavy ice coming down from Baffin Bay, which impeded her progress to a great extent, but she arrived off the entrance of Hudson Strait on June 22. She was headed for the strait and passed along the north side, but was compelled to change her course and was carried two-thirds of the width of the strait south, towards the north-west side of Ungava Bay; she was forced north again under great difficulties, arriving opposite Ashe Inlet about July 2, and crossed the strait to Douglas Harbour on the south side of the strait. The trip was continued, the vessel approaching near Salisbury Island and then across to Digges Island, and from there to the north end of Mansfield Island, and returned to the eastern entrance of Hudson Strait, north of Button Islands.

"The course steered the second trip was practically from the east to the west end of the strait as far as Digges Island, through the centre of the strait, returning in a northerly direction to some islands lying south of Salisbury Island and then to the vicinity of Emma Island, passing close to Big

Island, in the vicinity of Ashe Inlet, to the mouth of Ungava Bay and then north around the Button Islands to Cape Chidley, and from there to Nachvack Bay, arriving on July 31.

" The third trip was made from Nachvack Bay north to Kekerton Islands in Cumberland Gulf, and then south to the entrance of Hudson Strait and to the bottom of Ungava Bay; proceeding from that point on August 16, Commander Wakeham navigated the strait, going westward and crossing Hudson Bay to Fort Churchill, arriving there on August 28, returning through the centre of the strait as far as Port Burwell and then north around Cape Chidley returned to St. John's, Newfoundland.

" The *Diana* passed out of Hudson Strait on October 30 and arrived at Halifax after a rough passage on November 11, 1897.

" Two geological parties were taken on board the *Diana* and landed on the shores of Hudson Strait and Bay, but on one of the trips made through the strait they were picked up and taken to St. John's, Newfoundland; the *Diana* returned to the strait and resumed the trips already described.

Cruise of the 'Neptune,' 1903–4

" The *Neptune* left Halifax on August 24, 1903, under the command of A. P. Low, geologist. The main purpose of the expedition was to patrol the waters of Hudson Bay and of the eastern Arctic Islands further north, and for the purpose of establishing permanent stations for the collection of customs and the enforcement of Canadian law.

" The *Neptune* passed along the coast of Labrador, entering Nachvak Bay, thence to Port Burwell and from there northward to Cumberland Gulf, calling at Kerkton, and Blacklead. On the passage south from Cumberland Gulf, Cape Haven was made, north of Cyrus Field Bay. The course was followed across the mouth of Frobisher Bay and Hudson Strait was entered on the north side. The strait was crossed to Douglas Harbour and a passage taken for the east end of Charles Island. The cruise was continued past Southampton Island into

Hudson Bay and to Fullerton Harbour. The *Neptune* was put in winter quarters at Fullerton Harbour on September 23.

" A plan of Fullerton Harbour was made during the winter. On July 18, 1904, the *Neptune* left Fullerton Harbour, and steamed to the south towards Mansfield Island, and entered the strait, making her passage to Port Burwell, where she was met by the *Erik* with stores. The *Neptune* proceeded northwards for Smith Sound, taking a course along the coast of Greenland. The voyage was continued north to Cape Sabine, calling at Etah in latitude 78° 30′ north. On the way south, Ross Bay was crossed, and a record left at Cape Herschel on the mainland of the great island of Ellesmere. Proceeding south, Lancaster Sound was entered, and the *Neptune* passed along the island of North Devon and anchored off Beechey Island, where the crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror* of Sir John Franklin's expedition spent a winter. From Erebus Harbour, Beechey Island, the *Neptune* stood southward across Lancaster Sound for North Somerset Island, Leopold Island, and Cape Clarence at the mouth of Prince Regent Inlet, and from there the cruise was continued to Ponds Inlet. The passage was made south to Cumberland Gulf, and from Cumberland Gulf the *Neptune* returned to Port Burwell; from Port Burwell the cruise was continued through Hudson Strait to Fullerton in Hudson Bay.

" On the homeward voyage from Fullerton, Port Burwell was made, the vessel arriving there on October 1. The *Neptune* returned to Halifax, arriving on October 12.

" In addition to the establishing of mounted police stations and custom house stations, observations and examination of the geological formation of the places visited by Mr. Low, the commander, were made, thus a vast amount of geological knowledge was added to what had been previously acquired.

Expedition to Hudson Bay, 1904

" Major Moodie, of the Royal North-West Mounted Police, was sent in command of the government force, with myself in command of the *Arctic*.

" The *Arctic* left Quebec on September 17, 1904, and arrived at Port Burwell, Ungava Bay, on October 1. She left Port Burwell and passed through Hudson Strait without encountering any ice on the voyage until she got within a few miles of Fullerton Harbour; the ice was floating in and out of the harbour with the tide. It was newly made and is called slob ice. The ice in the inner harbour was frozen to a thickness of about 4 inches. Fullerton was made the winter quarters of the vessel.

" Major Moodie reported that the winter passed quickly and pleasantly, the lowest temperature being 52 degrees below zero, and this cold was not severely felt.

" On July 14, 1905, the ship ran clear of all ice and shaped her course for Cape Southampton, Coats Island. When she arrived at the island only a few pieces of floating ice were seen. Erik Harbour was entered, which was free of ice, excepting some pieces aground at the head of the harbour.

" About 40 miles east of Erik Harbour a harbour was found where a good size river empties into it. The land rises to a considerable height with good flat benches around the bay. The surrounding hills were covered with grass. It was found, however, that a bar exists which prevents vessels entering at any other time than high water. This harbour was called Préfontaine Harbour and the headland on the east side of the entrance named Cape Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and the island on the west side of the entrance White Island, after Colonel White, comptroller of the mounted police. The harbour was not shown on any chart, although it was the best one that had been entered; it averages about 1½ miles across. The natives say that the harbour was open on June 1, and that no heavy ice ever comes in from the strait. The *Arctic* passed towards the eastern entrance of Hudson Strait, calling at a number of places until she reached Port Burwell, and from Port Burwell went to Chateau Bay, where orders were received to proceed to Quebec.

" The voyage was uneventful, with the exception of breaking one propeller blade that was quickly replaced by a spare one, carried on board.

" There was but one report and that by Major Moodie, who stated in respect of the navigation of Hudson Strait that any well-built and well-engined steamer could enter the strait and bay early in July. It was possible for a steamer to be delayed by ice if the winds were from the north-east, but she would not be in any danger. However, the winds vary from year to year, and one year is no guide to what the prevailing winds will be in the next.

" In connection with the voyage, it is worthy of note that Major Moodie was commissioned by the government to establish mounted police stations, and for the *Arctic* under my command to attend to annexing to Canada arctic territory granted by the Imperial Government. It was intended to send the *Neptune* to Hudson Bay with small houses, to enable the men to establish a mounted police station at Fullerton Harbour, but delay occurred in getting the *Neptune* ready in time to reach Hudson Bay in the spring of 1905, therefore the trip to the more northern waters was abandoned until the spring of 1908." [1]

It now remains to give the opinions of navigators and others on the navigation of Hudson Strait and Bay and the period during which ports may be kept open.

[1] *Cruise of the Arctic*, 1908–9, by Captain J. E. Bernier, p. 324 *et seq.*

Training Polar Bear Cubs to be useful at Fort Churchill
Photo by Capt. French of the R.N.W.M.P., 1914.

CHAPTER IX

OPINIONS ON HUDSON BAY AND STRAIT

Lord Grey, then Governor-General of Canada, at the time of his visit to Hudson Bay, in the summer of 1910, called it the "Mediterranean of the North." It is the third largest sea in the world. The area of the Mediterranean is 977,000 square miles, of the Baltic 580,000, of Hudson Bay 355,000. Hudson Bay's length is 800 miles, its breadth 500: compared with any of the Great Lakes it is a veritable ocean, for Lake Superior's area is only 31,000 square miles, Lake Huron's but 23,000, Lake Erie's merely 9960, and Lake Ontario's barely 7240.

Hudson Bay and Strait are two large arms of the Atlantic Ocean, and are both well south of the arctic circle. Ice does not form in their waters, but come on both sides of Baffin's Land from the sub-arctic regions, drifting down through the strait along the Labrador coast and Belle Isle, when the summer sun begins to melt them in the extreme north. Some people, because they have witnessed or read of ice floes in the strait in August, have imagined that if such appear in the warmest month of the year, conditions must be worse still during the other months, more so in winter time. As a matter of fact, the colder it is the less floating ice there is, since there is none detached then from the glacial regions where it is formed. In the bay itself, although field ice is, no doubt, found in large quantities, it never impedes navigation, as boats follow their course through it as through so much spindrift. Only when the ice is crowding out of the bay in the early part of the summer is there real danger for the boats which allow themselves to be caught amongst its blocks.

But it seems a small matter to foresee the stockade from

either end of the strait: it is a problem rather of delay than of physical danger, affecting rather the price of charter than of marine insurance.

" Greatest dangers are to be feared and encountered outside the bay and straits, and in the open sweep of the Atlantic on the Labrador coast line, where great detached masses of the floe known as icebergs crowd down from Baffin Bay and Davis Strait. But icebergs are to be found at this season at the entrance to the St. Lawrence, and though they must necessarily be more numerous and more formidable further north, yet it is a known danger, and as such not insuperable to careful navigation. In a word, the difficulties of the route are trifling after the end of July so far as the bay and straits are concerned, and the real danger lies in north Atlantic waters beyond. This danger can be minimised by the resources of modern science, of which wireless telegraph stations on the coast line and on all ships plying in the Western Canadian trade is the greatest factor." [1]

Opinions as to the navigability of Hudson Bay and Strait are almost as numerous and varied as the men expressing themselves on the subject. We reproduce below several of these opinions, mostly of men who have seen conditions with their own eyes, and have thus been able to speak from personal observation.

J. A. J. M'Kenna, the author of *The Hudson Bay Route*, published by direction of the Minister of the Interior, makes the following pertinent remarks on the subject:

" In the course of a century and three-quarters, 750 vessels, ranging from seventy-gun ships to ten-ton pinnaces, crossed the ocean, passed through the straits, and sailed the bay in the service of the company (the Hudson's Bay Company). And only two were lost. A marvellous record, when it is remembered that all the craft were sailers and most of them small and of rude construction, and that the bay and strait afforded none of the modern accessories to navigation in the way of coast aids.

" At one time the Hudson Bay Company was well satisfied

[1] *Manitoba Free Press*, September 6, 1912.

if its ships wintered safely in the bay and returned the next year. Indeed, a gratuity of fifty guineas was allowed the captains who made the trip in two seasons. But by the middle of the eighteenth century the gratuity was only given to the captain who made the return trip in the one season; and what was once represented as absolutely impracticable, was very easily and safely performed.

"The navigation was found good enough to admit of the French several times by water contesting the possession of the British. In 1782 La Pérouse, the French admiral, brought a seventy-four-gun line of battleship and two frigates of thirty-six guns each to the mouth of the Nelson River.

"The company, from 1860, allowed American whalers access to the bay; and the experience of their captains tends in favour of the view that these waters can be utilised for commercial navigation."[1]

Captain Coates, in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company from 1727 to 1751, is not of the optimistic class: "As it is very hazardous," he says, "to enter the straits before the beginning of July for ice, so it is dangerous to be in that bay after the middle of September."[2]

Captain Falconer, in the service of the same company, noted in his journal for 1768–69 that the bay and strait could be navigated between July 15 and October 15.[3]

Captain Colin Sinclair, a native of York Factory, who for six years navigated the waters of the bay and strait, can see no extraordinary danger or difficulty in their navigation. He passed through the strait on a sealing voyage as early as April and saw no ice.[4]

In 1884, Captain Silsby, who for several years was engaged in navigating these northern waters, wrote that steamships could ply between the bay ports and Europe for four months in each year (July, August, September, and October), and five months in open winters.[5] Captain Adams is of the same opinion, but qualifies it by stating that even when navigation

[1] J. A. J. M'Kenna, *The Hudson Ray Route*, p. 45.
[2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 5.
[3] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 5.
[4] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 6.
[5] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 6.

is open there are possible difficulties because of the current from Davis Strait carrying ice across the mouths of Frobisher, Cumberland, and Hudson Straits.[1]

Captain Kennedy, who for eight years after 1838 coasted the shore line in a York boat from Chimo River to George River, thought navigation could be carried on without danger for three months.[2]

Captain Hawes, who made no less than fourteen voyages to the bay, believed also in four months of navigation, while Captain E. B. Fisher, a veteran whaler, thought three and a half months would represent the limit, and Captain Thomas Mackenzie did not advise coming out of the bay after October 5.[3]

Captain Bernier, the well-known arctic explorer and navigator, says: "With wireless telegraphy in a station at the entrance of Hudson Bay, the opening of navigation could be made in the first week of July by informing the steamers which side of the strait to pass on, so as to find clear navigable water."[4] In a former interview Captain Bernier had made the statement that Hudson Bay and Strait are open to navigation the year round, but as far as the strait is concerned, icebergs block the way in places according to where the current into or out of the bay drives them. With wireless stations established, so that ships could be directed in their course, the Hudson Bay ports would rank amongst the most important on the continent, owing to the very appreciable difference in distance to Europe, compared with that of other ports.

Captain H. E. Webb, superintendent of the Hudson Bay Navigation Company, in November 1912 said: "The strait is navigable three months a year for ordinary vessels, but to smaller craft navigation is open for five months."

Bishop Lofthouse, who has spent more than twenty years in mission work throughout what was the district of Keewatin, says that the Hudson Straits are just as safe for navigation, or will be when they are properly lighted, as the straits of Belle

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 6.
[2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 6.
[3] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 6.
[4] *Hudson's Bay Herald*, October 2, 1913.

Isle, more so in fact; for there are more accidents at Belle Isle than in the Hudson Straits.[1]

Commander Gordon, on his return from his second cruise, gave the following opinion: "If we regard the presence of field ice as the only barrier, the information which we have got would point to the months of July, August, September, and October as being the months in which the straits are passable. As a rule, in July there will be delays, but to vessels strengthened and sheathed there would be no danger making the passage. All the inhabitants of the Labrador, the straits, and the bay, spoken to on the subject, agreed in stating that the ice movements this year were much later than the average; at Fort Churchill the season was fully a month late, and on the Labrador three weeks, so that I think that it will be found that on the average four months will be the length of the season for practical navigation by steam vessels which would be freight carriers. There have been, I am informed, seasons when the straits were clear of ice in the month of June, but they are, according to the logs of the Hudson Bay ships, quite exceptional. Captain Hawes spoke of such being the case only once in his experience of fourteen years, and the dates which I have seen of the arrival of the Hudson Bay vessels at their ports of destination show no arrival earlier than August."[2]

Commander Wakeham in summing up the report of the cruise of the *Diana* in 1897 wrote thus: "I now conclude this part of the report by saying that I absolutely agree with Captain Gordon in fixing the date for the opening of navigation in Hudson Strait, for commercial purposes, by suitable vessels, at from July 1 to 10. I do not consider that the strait can be successfully navigated in June. Such ships as the *Diana* might force a passage through, but these vessels would be useless for commercial purposes. They have to be so braced and strengthened that they are impossible freight carriers. I consider that navigation should close from October 15 to 20. I would not dread the ice in October, though there is always a chance of the western end of

[1] *Press of Fall*, 1913. [2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 10.

the strait being blocked by the Fox Channel ice between Nottingham and Digges, or even about Charles Island. I believe, however, that as westerly winds prevail at this season the block would not be permanent and a passage will generally be found along the Labrador shore, which is bold and good. In Captain Hawes' journal at Churchill, which is certainly the most available harbour on the western shore of the bay, I found that on October 1, 1895, his men were off hunting on snowshoes, and there had been good snowshoeing for ten days. Of course the harbour does not freeze over before the end of October, but for some time before it closes it would not be safe for vessels, owing to the rush of the ice in the strong current. . . . We were favoured with a mild and comparatively calm month, yet the risks of navigation were so great that I have no hesitation whatever in saying that, after the last date which I have given above, it would be folly to think of carrying on any commercial traffic through the strait. I would, therefore, fix October 20 as the extreme limit of safe navigation in the fall. There is another and serious obstacle to the later navigation of the strait which I have not seen mentioned elsewhere—that is, the blocking of the eastern entrance of the strait by the descent of the Baffin's Bay ice. . . . It is carried right across the mouth of Hudson Strait, which is only separated from Frobisher Bay by Resolution Island, and on down the Labrador shore to the north-east coast of Newfoundland. It moves on and off shore with the wind. As described by Hall, it is a heavy pinnacled ice, into which it would not be safe to put a loaded ship during the end of October. . . . This pack has, therefore, to be reckoned with by every one coming out of Hudson Strait during the end of October. It has been down as early as October 15; we saw nothing of it on the evening of October 30 last, but it was snowing heavily at the time, and we might have passed close to the pack without seeing it. It could not have been far away, as the ice was in sight from Belle Isle during the first days of December. Given a drift of 15 miles a day, which is not an excessive allowance, it must have been past the mouth of Hudson Strait on November 1. Therefore, for all the

reasons I have enumerated, I consider October 20 as the extreme limit of safe navigation in the fall." [1]

Lieutenant Schwatka, of the United States navy, in command of one of the many expeditions searching for relics of Franklin, wrote: "I was in Hudson Bay and Straits and adjoining countries about two years and a quarter, and during that time saw considerable of the navigation of those bodies of water, and discussed the subject very often with navigators who had spent very many years therein, principally American whaling captains, their officers and crew. From my experience and their conversation, I thought the straits and bay could be considered navigable for at least two months of the year for sailing craft and this would probably be more than doubled for steam. Of course, the bay is navigable much earlier and later than the straits, and the above estimate is for the latter. Again, a ship strengthened for the ice might prolong these times on each end considerably, and a complete hydrographic survey of the straits, giving all possible harbours of refuge, would show that there is less danger than there is generally supposed. Signal stations on prominent points could also materially assist vessels essaying the passage by a simple code expressing the conditions of the ice." [2]

J. W. Tyrrell, who has gone through the straits several times, writes: "The strait can, in my opinion, be relied upon for unobstructed navigation from July 15 to November 1, with a possible extension of two weeks at either end. . . . I would say that the proposition to open up a route for commerce through Hudson Bay and Strait is, in my opinion, a wise and perfectly feasible move, both because of the service it will render in developing the local resources of the country, and because of the additional transportation facilities it will afford for the products of Western Canada." [3]

Mr. Tyrrell has also said: "As to icebergs, they are occasionally met with in Hudson Straits, being sometimes carried in along the north shore by the prevailing current from Davis Strait, but they are by no means of frequent occurrence,

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 13. [2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 14.
[3] Tyrrell, *op. cit.* p. 249.

and not one tenth as numerous as off the strait of Belle Isle."

The *European Magazine and London Review* for 1797 has the following on the navigation of Hudson Bay and Strait: "The ships employed in the trade pass the straits the beginning of August and return in September. The navigation is very safe, not a ship being lost in twenty years. It is supposed that were the trade to be laid open, the exports thither might be exceedingly enlarged." [1]

G. Halcrow, a retired factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and a resident of the Pas, who has lived forty-five years or more in the Hudson Bay district, eight of which have been spent on the bay, has passed through the strait several times. His opinion is that navigation by that route is possible eight months in the year.

We have saved for the last the opinions of the men who, foreseeing the possibilities of navigation as no doubt science will eventually make them, go so far as expressing the opinion that boats, with the help of proper lighthouses, wireless telegraphy and special construction, should be able to cross from the Atlantic Ocean to Hudson Bay and *vice versâ* the year round.

The most quoted of these opinions has been that of Dr. Bell, F.R.G.S., who, in nine years, made seventeen trips to Hudson Bay with the several government cruises: "It is impossible," says Mr. Bell, "that there should be at any time in the twelve months difficulty in navigating the straits, for they are upon tide water, and more than that, the waters of the Gulf Stream come back this way from the north of the Coast of Europe. There may be some little difficulty near the shore at some time of the year, but I do not think it will ever be necessary to have ice-breaking boats. Why, navigation through the straits should be particularly easy, because, while there may at times be floating ice, there are no rocks and no islands upon which to go ashore." [2]

The opinion of Captain J. Hackland, who was employed by the Hudson's Bay Company, is not less categorical: "The

[1] Tyrrell, *op. cit.* p. 249. [2] *Hudson's Bay Herald*, March 7, 1912.

straits are open the year round and never freeze. There is no reason why steamships should not navigate the straits at any time of the year. The navigation of Hudson Bay and Straits is not dangerous; there are no shoals and very few fogs. During sixteen years of navigation of Hudson Bay, we were never impeded by the fogs." [1]

Walter Dixon, twenty years employed in the Hudson's Bay Company, is of the same opinion: "I have reason to believe that the Hudson's Straits and a great body of the bay proper are navigable at all seasons of the year, and afford no practical difficulty to ordinary navigation. Icebergs are not formed in the Hudson Bay or Straits, nor can they get there as far as I am aware. Hudson Bay is less subject to storms than the Great Lakes. From what I have observed of the movement of ice in Hudson Bay during the year, I am perfectly assured that an ordinary iron screw steamer would never have any difficulty in getting through or round that which is largely met with in the bay or straits. The chief reason why old sailing vessels of the Hudson's Bay Company often met with detention in the ice was, and is, that at the season when there is pack ice, there is generally very little wind, and sailing vessels are consequently as helpless amongst the ice as they would be in a dead calm in the middle of the Atlantic or elsewhere." [2]

In the early fall of 1913, dwelling upon the objections that have been advanced from time to time by not altogether disinterested individuals against the navigability of Hudson Bay and Strait, H. E. Penrose, of s.s. *Bonaventure*, which made two trips to Port Nelson in the season of that year, expressed his opinion thus: "With the erecting of the high-power wireless station at Nelson, in conjunction with the proposed chain along the bay to the entrance of the strait, and possibly a government scout operating along the track, masters of incoming vessels would be in possession of full information regarding the condition of the route many hours before entering the straits. Up to the present a certain amount of prejudice has been felt against Hudson Strait. It

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 6. [2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 6.

was uncharted, and very little of the existing conditions known, except at the Hudson's Bay Company's post, which knowledge never appears to have been published. It was not so many years ago the Persian Gulf was looked upon as being one of the world's worst places for navigation; but cargo was offered, ships went, and to-day there is a large trade in that direction. The Bay of Biscay still has its terrors to many travellers, but it is the last remains of an old prejudice which arose in the time of sailing ships, when it often took a week and more to cross, during which time it was highly probable something of Atlantic unpleasantness would manifest itself. With the march of time old prejudices die out, to give way to the necessities of modern life, and our fears of to-day are laughed at to-morrow."

The reader will draw his own conclusions from the perusal of these various opinions; he will, of course, note that some are possibly too cautious and others probably too optimistic.

In closing this chapter we cannot resist the desire of quoting again the gentle New York writer, whose conception of progress puts to shame the effeminate weaklings who find their way into the sanctums of some of this country's largest and most advertised newspapers, and into the very precincts of its legislative chambers.

"After giving an account of three wrecks in four years, I hope it may not seem inconsistent to say that I believe the next century will see a Hudson's Bay route to Europe. What —you say—after telling of three wrecks in four years? Yes—what Atlantic port does not have six wrecks in ten years? New York and Montreal have more. If the Hudson's Bay route is not fit for navigation, the country must make it fit for navigation. Of telegraphs, shelters, lighthouses, there is not now one. Canals have been dug for less cause than the Upper Narrows of Hudson Straits. If Peter the Great had waited till St. Petersburg was a fit site for a city, there would have been no St. Petersburg. He made it fit. The same problem confronts north-west America to-day. It is absurd that a population of millions has no seaport nearer than 2000 miles. Churchill or York would be seaports in the

middle of the continent. Of course, there would be wrecks and difficulties. The wrecks are part of the toll we pay for harnessing the sea. The difficulties are what make nations great. One day was the delay allowed the fur ships for the straits. Who has not waited longer than one day to enter New York harbour or Montreal?" [1]

[1] Laut, *op. cit.* p. 313 *et seq.*

CHAPTER X

POLITICAL HISTORY OF HUDSON BAY RAILWAY

ALTHOUGH the agitation for the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway may be traced back as early as the middle eighties when Hugh Sutherland, rightly called the father of the project, received a land grant from Sir John Macdonald's government, and actually built 40 miles out of Winnipeg before his resources failed, the real movement, with any appearance of success, did not start until the formation of the Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905. True, during the campaign for the Federal Elections the preceding year, a plank, approving of the project as providing a cheap and direct outlet for the products of Western Canada, had been included in the platforms of the two political parties: the *Canadian Trade Review* of Montreal on December 18, 1903, had given comparative figures showing that Winnipeg, Duluth, and St. Paul would be 602, 473, and 144 miles closer respectively to Liverpool via Hudson Bay than via Montreal for the first and New York for the other two: the London *Times* of November 6, 1903, had dealt at length with the value of Hudson Bay to Canada as a new route for the transportation of its grain, paper, mineral, timber, and fur wealth: a few days after the appearance of this last article, Mr. A. B. Aylesworth, speaking at a University banquet in Toronto, P. T. M'Grath in the *North American Review*, and an editorial in the *Toronto Star* had dealt with the resources of the bay and the country adjacent: nevertheless the elections held in 1905 in the two newly formed provinces marked the time at which proper attention really began to be given to the subject.

On January 10, 1905, Commissioner A. P. Low, in an address at Ottawa, had explained and advocated the Hudson Bay route, showing that, on account of the shorter distance, at one-half a cent a ton per mile, the saving

per bushel of wheat would be fifteen cents on the whole trip to Europe, or $9,000,000 on 60,000,000 bushels. Speaking at Winnipeg on February 2, J. W. Tyrrell, who had made four trips through Hudson Strait and five across the bay, had said: "I have been strongly impressed with the great value of the Hudson's Bay and the Strait route, and I am firmly convinced that it is bound to be in the no very distant future the great outlet for the produce of the Canadian North West." Among the resolutions passed by the Associated Boards of Trade of Western Canada assembled in convention at Regina in June and July 1905 the eighth had supported the Hudson Bay Railway project.

With these valued expressions of sentiment fresh on their minds, the delegates at the Liberal and Provincial Rights or Conservative Conventions of Saskatchewan and Alberta, necessarily embodied in their respective platforms planks favouring the immediate construction of the Hudson Bay Railway. The Liberals, however, advocated the building of the railway by the Federal Government as a national undertaking, to be operated, when completed, by an independent commission, while the Conservatives would have it that the line should be built jointly by the three western provinces, to be owned, controlled, and operated jointly by them in the interests of the western people. In the course of the campaigns which preceded the elections, the Hon. Walter Scott in Saskatchewan argued that the project was essentially a Dominion Government affair and the Provinces should not be expected to bear a cost of $20,000,000. Speaking at Regina on December 1, a few days before the elections, the Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior in the Laurier cabinet, in criticising the stand taken on the question by the Opposition contended: "The endorsement of the Haultain proposal would mean the relief of the Dominion Government from the construction of that railway so far as the people of Saskatchewan were concerned or would mean that the prospect of a railway to the bay would be indefinitely postponed. The Scott government realises the desirability of the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway, but it also

recognises that past and present Dominion Governments have accepted that as a Dominion responsibility, and they propose to hold the Dominion to it."

The electors returned a majority of Liberal members in both provinces. So much attention had been given to the question of the Hudson Bay route that it became quite evident that the Federal authorities would take notice of the demands of the west, and begin work at the earliest opportunity: in his manifesto of December 2, the Hon. Walter Scott had said: "We have been obeying the direction of the Saskatchewan Liberal Convention by urging the Hudson's Bay Road project on the Federal authorities and not without success. I have now received assurance that the Dominion Government admit this project to be a national undertaking, and that they will not deny their responsibility."

The elections over, the enthusiasm in favour of the northern route did not subside. Every public body, political or economical, which met in 1906 passed resolutions further approving of the project and urging its early completion. The province of Ontario itself began to seriously wake up to the importance of having railway connections with Hudson Bay, and, as a result, the T. & N.O. was a source of much comment and public consideration in that province during 1906; opinions were vented by the *Toronto Globe* and other eastern newspapers that this line must eventually be extended to James Bay. Dominion help was sought and refused.

In the meantime the Canadian Northern Railway began construction on their Hudson Bay branch from Etoimami, now Hudson Bay Junction, to the Pas, and a number of companies, following a speech by Sir Wilfrid Laurier favouring the immediate construction of a railway to Hudson Bay for the development of the countries bordering thereon, applied for charters for the extension of their systems northward: by the close of 1906 the Dominion Government had issued eight such charters for lines to Canada's inland sea.

One after another the reports of seamen and others who had visited the northern waters were unearthed, and their statements showing the immense saving to be effected in trans-

portation charges by the shortening of the grain route by 1000 miles were published: hardly any attention was paid to the obstacles in the way, such as danger from ice, short season, etc. The new route was commercially desirable, public opinion considered it commercially practicable. Manitoba's Leader of Opposition speaking at Winnipeg on November 13 went so far as saying that if the Dominion Government would not take up the Hudson Bay Railway the Liberals of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta would do so, thereby supplementing what Hon. Walter Scott had stated in Ottawa on July 26: " After all is said and done the people of Western Canada refuse to take their eyes off the Hudson's Bay route. For twenty years they have been looking that way. But for my determination to leave no stone unturned to bring about action upon this project, I should not have remained here so long. It is now brought to the point where concrete terms are being considered. The Prime Minister is most favourably impressed and I have the utmost confidence that the Hudson's Bay Railway will, within a comparatively short time, be an actuality." This declaration of the Saskatchewan Premier was the result of the resolution passed unanimously in his House, declaring the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway " necessary for the commerce of Canada and for the full development of the agricultural and other resources of the Dominion."

Interest in the Hudson Bay Railway continued in 1907: the project was regarded as the most important one before the country, and as such was introduced in debate in the Senate on February 6 by Hon. D. Ferguson, and in the Commons a few days later, February 22, by Mr. W. E. Knowles, the latter contending that the building of the line was urgently needed, eminently feasible, and had become a national question. All the western members strongly supported the project. In this they received the endorsement of Hon. G. E. Foster on the Opposition side. Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself, referring to the standing provision in the Statutes of a subsidy offer of 12,000 acres of land along the route of such railway, made the following important statement: " If the

subsidy, the aid which has been offered, has not been sufficient to procure the construction of the railway, I agree, for my part, that the time has come when we should make a new effort and provide some means of building it. I agree altogether with what has been said by my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster), that the time has come for the construction of this railway, and I may say to my hon. friend who has brought this question to the attention of the House (Mr. Knowles) and to the members of the House, especially of my friends from the North-West Territories, who are particularly interested in this matter, that at this very moment the subject is engaging the attention of the government."

Meantime articles appeared in British, Canadian, and American reviews and other journals praising the project, which, however, had also its opponents and critics. Senator J. P. B. Casgrain, in the *Montreal Herald*, considered the reports too glowing; and Professor R. W. Ellis, in the *University Magazine*, could see nothing worth stopping the public attention: his line of argument was, "that the much-talked-of Hudson's Bay Railway, if built immediately, cannot hope to prove a financial success. Owing to the keen competition of the all-water route by the Great Lakes, it will not be able to handle the Manitoba grain or general produce. What traffic it might hope to obtain is at present so small and the time of navigation so short, that to make the road pay, if built immediately, seems impossible."

"If you want the Hudson Bay Railway you must support us." These words, adapted from the many utterances on the subject by the different political speakers, during the Federal campaign of 1908, sum up the situation in Western Canada that year, as far as the Hudson Bay route was concerned. In spite of opposition literature printed with a view to warn the electorate that the government was not at all in earnest about the project, and was only making promises for the purpose of catching votes, the definite statement of Sir Wilfrid Laurier at Niagara Falls on September 18 was received "with acclamation by the people of the Prairie Provinces."

" We have undertaken the construction of another railway," said Sir Wilfrid, " the Hudson's Bay Railway. The Hudson's Bay Railway, I am sure, does not appeal very much to the people of Welland County. It concerns more the people of the west. But I say to you, gentlemen of Ontario, and you will agree with me, that what concerns one portion of the community concerns every part of the community. Now, we have come to the conclusion that this railway is a necessity, owing to the condition in which our fellow-citizens in the west are placed. This railway will give an alternative or optional route. At the present time all the wheat as soon as it is tracked is sent out to Lake Superior. We want to provide another railway by Hudson's Bay. There will then be the present route and the Hudson's Bay route, and the man who raises wheat and cattle will have two outlets for his production. We have been asked: ' Are you not going to hurt the trade of the St. Lawrence if you do that? ' Oh ye of little faith! the trade of Canada is too great even for these two outlets. What we see coming will be more than sufficient for both the St. Lawrence and the Hudson's Bay routes. We have come to the conclusion that the time to build this railway is now; not to-morrow, but now; and we have surveyors in the field looking at the condition of the country and preparing plans for us, which we shall be prepared to put into execution as soon as we receive them. The government will build the railway, or rather somebody will be entrusted with building it for us, but whatever we do, all the terminals and all the elevators shall be built by the government, and retained under all and every circumstance by the government so as to insure the largest measure of benefit possible to the Canadian people in the North-West Provinces."

Supporters of the Liberal administration vied with one another in extolling the immense benefits which would derive to the country in general and to western provinces in particular from the construction of the railroad, and the press of the party in the prairie provinces proclaimed the project " the paramount issue."

The Conservatives, on the other hand, objected to the Liberals claiming all the merit of the undertaking, and expressed scepticism as to the government's real intentions. They reminded the electors that in 1895-96 Sir Charles Tupper had pledged himself to the construction of the line. Speaking to the press on September 30, Mr. R. L. Borden pointedly remarked: "Sir Wilfrid Laurier has suddenly discovered, on the eve of a general election, that the Hudson's Bay Railway must be built. The Conservative party has been pledged to the building of that railway since 1895, when it was promised by Sir Charles Tupper. The present government has reached the same conclusion in the thirteenth year of its administration. Sir Wilfrid Laurier declares that the government will build the railway, or rather some party of men will be entrusted with its building. In my opinion the road should be built by the government immediately, and under such conditions as will ensure absolute and thorough control of a railway to be paid for by the farmers of the west."

In the meantime arrangements had been made whereby the homesteading area in South Alberta and North Manitoba had been extended to 30,000,000 acres, with a proviso for selling one-sixth thereof at $3 per acre by way of pre-emption to furnish the necessary credit for the building of the line, and the clause under the old act providing a grant of 12,000 acres per mile for the same end had been rescinded. On August 10 the first practical step towards construction had been taken in the departure, from Winnipeg, of four survey parties aggregating 100 men, to locate the route of the railway out of the Pas, at the extreme north end in the North-West Territories of the Canadian Northern Railway, under the supervision of Mr. John Armstrong, B.A., B.Sc., M.Can.Soc.C.E., appointed chief engineer of the road.

Besides the report of Mr. M. J. Butler, Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, wherein the road and its advantages were briefly outlined, "the darling object of the inhabitants west of the Great Lakes," as Hon. Walter Scott styled the Hudson Bay Railway in one of his speeches, was perhaps not as prominently before the public in 1909 as it had been since

1905. In the Saskatchewan House the government was criticised by the Opposition for the little advancement which the project had made since the announcement made by the provincial premier in 1905 that "the Federal Government admit this to be a national undertaking, and will not deny their responsibility." At the close of the debate a resolution moved by H. H. Willway (Conservative) urging upon the Dominion Government the immediate construction of the railway and provision at the present session of parliament for its actual construction, and that the lieutenant-governor be asked to transmit the resolution to the Dominion authorities, was passed unanimously.

In the Manitoba House a long resolution of T. C. Norris recapitulating a series of allegations as to the Hudson Bay Railway lands, dealing with the original Norquay Government guarantee of bonds—$256,000 in 1886—the failure of the Dominion to give an expected land grant, the defalcation of the company concerned, the provincial liability for interest and principal, the final conveyance—as part of a general and wider arrangement—by the Canadian Northern Railway of 256,000 acres to the government to cover this liability, the sale of these lands back to the company in 1904 for $400,000, was voted down by 24 to 12 with hardly any discussion, after Hon. Robert Rogers, Minister of Public Works, had pointed out that "no one acquainted with the facts would claim that the Greenway Government acquired the 256,000 acres of Hudson's Bay lands, or that the present government had anything to do with those lands."

The first actual construction on the much-discussed and promised Hudson Bay Railway took place in the fall of 1910, when Hon. Geo. Graham, Minister of Railways, turned the first sod at the Pas. This step had been foreseen from the announcement made in the speech from the throne in the previous April that the construction of a railway from the western wheat fields to Hudson Bay was under consideration by the government. The event, however, passed off very quietly. In the winter, work on the piers of the huge 850 ft. bridge across the Saskatchewan River at that point was

commenced, to be abandoned after the two abutments and three piers had been completed.

In the course of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's tour of the west, the Hudson Bay Railway was mentioned at every public meeting held, and at Melfort the premier promised that the line would be completed in three years. A feature of the several addresses which were presented to Sir Wilfrid by the many grain growers' associations which approached him, was the expressed desire that the new railway should be government owned and government operated, thus defeating the ends of the Canadian Northern Railway who, in building from Hudson Bay Junction to the Pas, had hoped to obtain the permission to build to the bay, failing which they wished to at least be granted the operation of the road once completed by the government. To the numerous representations made to him on this point, Sir Wilfrid Laurier would answer so as not to commit himself or his government. He however stated positively: " I have stated that we should have to build the Hudson's Bay Railway. I think we are prepared for that, and you will require no argument from me to prove to you that it is required." No doubt, the turning of the first sod on the new railway by Hon. Geo. Graham, on September 28, was a direct result of the impression left on the mind of the Prime Minister, during the western tour, that the people of the Western Provinces had to have this road, and the sooner the better.

With the advent of spring in 1911, the work on the bridge at the Pas stopped, and throughout the summer nothing much was done on the balance of the road. In the early fall the contract for the first 185 miles of the road was given at $3,078,354 to Mr. J. D. M'Arthur of Winnipeg, who immediately began putting in supplies and clearing the right of way. Then the Laurier Administration was defeated at the polls on the reciprocity question in the latter part of September, and the new Minister of Railways, the Hon. Frank Cochrane, issued orders to stop the work pending an investigation into the project.

In the meantime deputations from different western cities

R.N.W.M. Policeman ready for a Dash to the North from the Pas, 1913

travelled to Ottawa to interview the government on the advisability of changing the starting point of the railway from the Pas to some other town. Their representations were promised consideration, but towards the end of the winter orders were issued to resume work, and when the spring of 1912 came the contractors had from 300 to 400 men on the job. Soon the announcement was made that the second section of the road from Thicket Portage to Split Lake, 68 miles, was also under contract to the same firm at $1,811,275, and after a visit in person to the bay from the head of Lake Winnipeg on September 29, the Minister of Railways announced that the contract for the third and last section of the road, 165 miles, had also been given to Mr. M'Arthur at $3,668,128, and that the line would be completed in 1914. Not much progress, however, was accomplished in 1912 besides the grading of some 50 miles of the road.

Arrangements were also made the same year by the Department of Railways and Canals for sending a thoroughly equipped expedition to Hudson Bay, and in June the *Arctic* and *Minto* left to make surveys and investigate the coast between Fort Churchill and Port Nelson, and to make a magnetic survey of the bay and strait. Decision as to the harbour to be chosen as terminus was withheld pending investigation made at the two ports by Mr. Hazen, a port engineer of vast experience.

Throughout the year the Hudson Bay Railway project attracted considerable attention, partly due to the extension of the boundaries of Manitoba, which were made to include both Fort Churchill and Port Nelson. The programme of the Manitoba Government for the year included a branch line from Winnipeg to connect with the Hudson Bay Railway north of the Pas, via Grand Rapids, thus carrying out the policy of the late Hon. John Norquay.

Apart from the usual Hudson Bay Railway resolutions, the last session of the second Saskatchewan Legislature urged that the Hudson Bay Railway and a line of steamers thence to Great Britain were essential to provincial progress: this was included in the platform of the Liberal party during

the campaign of the general elections in that province the same year.

The year 1913 saw some material progress. In the latter part of the winter of 1912-13 the contractors teamed immense quantities to the front from the Pas and from the head of Lake Winnipeg. The bridge over the Saskatchewan, on which work had been resumed in the winter of 1911-12, was completed, and in the early part of May the first rail of the Hudson Bay Railway was laid. Besides several miles of yard and gravel pit track, about 80 miles were laid before the contractors, who had been constantly delayed by the lack of ties, stopped work in the middle of December.

The work of 1913 included also the erection of two wireless stations, one each at the Pas and Port Nelson, and the sending of a dozen boats to the latter point loaded with men, supplies, and material to start work on the terminals at the bay end. Owing to lack of charts, buoys, lighthouses, and unloading facilities, the *Alette*, which had the wireless station on board, was sunk: apart from some minor but most essential pieces of the sending apparatus, the station was salvaged, and by the end of the year was erected and receiving messages as its sister station at the Pas. The *Cearenz*, chartered from the John F. O'Meara Co. of New York to carry lumber and coal, was also wrecked: the *Alcazar*, the *Bonaventure*, the *Bellaventure*, the *Sindbad*, the *Beothic* made the journey without mishap, except for the latter, which met with an accident in the Belle Isle Strait. The *Bonaventure* made two trips, fetching the Port Nelson dredge on her second voyage. Gasolene lighters and two barges were also among the boats taken to Port Nelson.

As every other big project, the Hudson Bay Railway has its detractors: without a single exception, however, the knockers are eastern men. The whole of Western Canada to the Pacific coast favours the road and expects great things from it: even the inhabitants of the northern United States believe that it will eventually considerably reduce the cost of transportation, both on imports and exports. Among the eastern papers which have deemed it good policy to ridicule

and otherwise disparage the Hudson Bay Railway must be quoted, as heading the list: *Saturday Night, The Monetary Times,* and *The Globe,* all of Toronto. It may be noted that the latter supported the project in its early stages, and only changed its front when actual construction began in 1910.[1]

[1] The data of this chapter have been procured mostly from Castell Hopkins' *Canadian Annual Review.*

CHAPTER XI

CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT

In this chapter we shall simply place before the reader a summary of the report of the Hudson Bay Railway surveys published in October 1909 by Mr. M. J. Butler, Deputy Minister of Railways and Chief Engineer. In one particular the report was somewhat a surprise to the whole country, in that it peremptorily recommended Port Nelson as the best port on Hudson Bay over Fort Churchill, which had always been mentioned as the sure port of the first railway to reach the shores of the northern sea: in fact, in this prevision, speculators had already secured and subdivided considerable land in the expectation of the immense profits to be made when the route began being used.

In his introduction of Chief Engineer Armstrong's[1] report, which forms the principal part of his own report, Mr. Butler gives due credit to the prompt manner in which Mr. Armstrong organised his survey parties, and the way they performed their work.

Entering the subject from a practical point of view, he remarks that he has changed the estimate of the chief engineer of the road to provide for 80 lb. rails instead of 60 lb., and has also estimated the cost of the terminals and equipment, the latter to comprise thirty-two freight trains and one express train per day of twenty-four hours.

Approving the recommendation of Port Nelson as terminus, he shows that it is of the utmost importance that the bay and strait be hydrographically surveyed, to arrive at the position and cost of the necessary lighthouses. He believes that information should also be secured as to the harbours on the

[1] Mr. Armstrong has severed his connection with the Hudson Bay Railway, and is now on the engineering staff of the Hudson Bay, Peace River and Pacific Railway Company. He has been replaced by Mr. J. W. Porter.

The Start of the Hudson Bay Railway, at the Pas

Labrador coast and the special features of Davis Strait, and that a lighthouse should be located at the most southerly end of Greenland.

The distance from Liverpool to Port Nelson, passing to the north of Ireland, is stated to be 3200 miles against 3007 from Montreal as measured on a Mercator projection map.

In order to give an idea of the business which can be handled by the proposed railway, Mr. Butler says that the general map of the north-west shows the areas tributary to the Pas and Winnipeg: the Pas is about the same distance from Hudson Bay as Winnipeg is from the Great Lakes. Drawing a straight line from Weyburn to Dauphin,[1] he shows how that part of the three western provinces lying west of the line will form the Pas territory, while what there is east will continue to belong to Winnipeg.

With a 0.4 or 21 feet to the mile grade, 32 trains can haul 64,000,000 bushels of wheat in 30 days. As it is not probable that ships would offer in sufficient number to transport the grain to Europe fast enough, a great proportion would have to be stored until the following August.

Among other sources of traffic may be mentioned: the exportation of cattle; the usual package freight to and from Europe; the import coal trade from Nova Scotia.

The cost of a 32-train equipment would be approximately $9,000,000: it would furnish employment to 108 train crews, 150 telegraph operators, 54 gangs of section men, shopmen, round-house men, superintendents, train and yard masters.

Mr. Butler concludes his introductory remarks by stating that the saving possible arising to the farmers of the west from the use of the road would be 5 cents[2] per bushel, further noting that according to Captain Bernier it is not safe for steamers of ordinary construction to be caught in the vicinity of Fox Channel after October 15. He then gives way for Mr. Armstrong's report.

On receipt of his instructions in July 1908, Chief Engineer

[1] *See* map facing p. 192.

[2] According to W. Thibaudeau, C.E., the saving would be 15 cents. M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 50. A. P. Low also says 15 cents. Cf. *supra*, p. 73.

Armstrong divided the territory to cover between the Pas and Fort Churchill in four sections of about 120 miles each. A fifth party attended to purely exploratory work. From information obtained on the ground, it soon became apparent that an examination of the Nelson route might prove useful. For this reason, on completion of its work, the exploratory party was reorganised and entrusted with examining more thoroughly the Nelson route and making a preliminary survey of Port Nelson. The work which was commenced from the Pas and Split Lake in October 1908 was completed in March and April 1909 by three of the parties, and in July and August of the same year by the other two. A point worth noting is that the health of the men throughout the work was uniformly good, not a single serious accident or case of sickness being recorded on all the work.

With 110 men on the job, the expenses amounted to $124,763.75 including reports, or about one quarter of what it generally costs for work of this nature. The surveys were made in the usual manner with transit level and chain. Contour-topography was taken over the greater portion of the line, as well as all lakes, swamps, and other points of interest in the vicinity of the line.

The report of the chief engineer, in passing, deals with natural resources, Mr. Armstrong stating that they are of much greater value than generally supposed. The lakes and streams which abound are bordered by areas of commercial timber, varying from a few acres to fifty square miles. Only the lands along the lines of survey were examined, however, but everything indicates that the same conditions extend on either side. The territory should be examined thoroughly by competent timber cruisers.

With the help of clearing and drainage, much agricultural land will be made available: the fact that these lands will be within a few hours' run of an ocean port may give them a value not hitherto thought of, and may cause a more rapid settlement than expected. For years all kinds of grain and vegetables have been grown successfully at the inland posts of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Records of the survey parties extending from November to March confirm the reports of the Meteorological Office that the climate is about the same as that of Prince Albert.

Limestone and marble have been found, the former in unlimited quantities close to the Pas, the latter in smaller quantities at Marble Island[1] in Hudson Bay and at Fort Churchill. Iron ores, gold, silver, galena, and mica are among the other minerals to be found in the district visited. Many varieties of fish abound in the lakes, rivers, and in the bay. This last resource, alone, will prove of great profit to the Hudson Bay Railway, over which the Western Provinces will be able to obtain fresh fish within twenty-four hours after it is caught.

Of the waterways tributary to the Hudson Bay Railway several are navigable, chief amongst them the Saskatchewan River from Edmonton and Medicine Hat and the Red River by Lake Winnipeg from Grand Forks. The discharge of the Nelson River is about 200,000 cubic feet and that of the Churchill 40,000 cubic feet.

Of the proposed extensions of the Hudson Bay Railway southerly the chief one is that along the Carrot River Valley, passing by the Pasquia Hills, through a country where fertile farm lands and valuable timber areas are known to exist.[2]

Mr. Armstrong at this point furnishes data about the two routes, the Churchill and the Nelson. The first 150 miles are common to the two routes. Taking the Churchill route first, the first section, approximately 120 miles, is through comparatively level or smooth country, affording easy grades

[1] All other authors seem to say that the rocks on the island have only the " appearance " of marble. Dr. Bell calls them " light coloured, fine, grained quartzite, associated with glossy mica schists."—*Hudson Bay and Straits*, 1885.

[2] The valley of Carrot River and the country included between it and the main Saskatchewan, bounded on the south side by the Birch Hill range. There is a narrow strip on the Great River, about five miles broad, where the soil is light and of an indifferent quality. The area of available land probably does not exceed 3,000,000 acres.—(*North-West Territory*, by Henry Youle Hind, M.A., p. 32.) It may be noted from the same report that the only district larger in size is that of the Red River and Assiniboine, which contains 3,500,000 acres.

and cheap construction: the country is underlaid with limestone in horizontal beds. Seventy per cent. of the grading is in clay loam, thirty per cent. in sand, gravel, swamp or muskeg. "It may be remarked here that what is called muskeg in this country is not a true muskeg, but would be more properly defined as swamp. Good bottom is usually obtained at a depth of 3 or 4 feet, and very seldom exceeds 7 or 8 feet." Steel bridges will be required over the Saskatchewan and Frog Rivers. The second section of 120 miles is through granite country: rock cuttings will be necessary. From the 240th mile to the 360th mile the roughest country is encountered, there being the rise between the two basins of the Nelson and the Churchill. The summit is not very high, but the approaches are rather sudden and steep. The fourth section, extending beyond the 360th mile to Fort Churchill, will not require much yardage, but the northern 70 miles over the tundra or barren lands may prove quite expensive on account of the perpetual frost. The timber over the first two sections is more or less valuable: over sections three and four it is not worth much where there is any. A third bridge will be required over the Deer River. The curvature averages 9° 55′ per mile. Grades .4 northbound and .6 southbound have been adopted.

The description given for the first division of the Churchill route may be applied in a general way to the whole of the Nelson route, with little rock work, much clay loam, and small percentages of sand, gravel, and swamp: there is no tundra on this route. The timber is of the same quality as that described in the first two sections of the Churchill route. Sand and gravel, except on the last 70 or 80 miles of the Churchill route, are found in sufficient quantities for easy ballasting. The curvature over the Nelson route averages about 5° 30′: the grade .4 both ways. Two more bridges are required, both over the Nelson, one at Manitou Rapids, where the crossing is particularly favourable, the river being confined in one channel of less than 350 feet with banks of perpendicular granite rock so situated as to make it possible to choose almost any desired elevation between 50 and 100 feet above the

water. On account of the deep water and the swift current —6 to 8 miles an hour—either a single span or an arch bridge will be necessary. The second, nearer to Port Nelson, will be about 3000 feet in length from grade to grade, with a waterway of 1500 feet and the grade line approximately 80 feet above the water. Other river crossings may be made with trestles.

The results of the surveys at Port Nelson, taking inland rail communication and all other conditions into consideration, seem to justify the recommendation that a further appropriation for an accurate survey of that port be made before it is rejected as a terminus for the Hudson Bay Railway.[1]

Then follow the estimates of the cost of the road.

The estimate for clearing is based on a right of way 150 feet wide with the necessary allowances added for sidings and terminals: it will be light on the average, through spruce and jack-pine and a little poplar and tamarack. The northern 100 miles of the Churchill route will require practically no clearing. The cost has been figured at $40 per acre: grubbing should cost $100 per acre.

To make sure that all contingencies will be covered, the cost of grading has been figured at 35 per cent. in excess of what the profile actually shows, and a liberal addition of yardage has been provided for sidings and terminals. The average prices adopted are $1.80 for solid rock, 65 cents for loose rock, and 30 cents for earth: in the latter class of work, the portion from Hudson Bay Junction to the Pas of the Canadian Northern Railway, a much worse proposition than is to be encountered on the Hudson Bay Railway, was done at a profit for 25 cents during the high-wage period of 1906 and 1907.

Access to the field of operations is relatively easy: by rail

[1] At a conference held by Captain Bernier and Captain Bartlett with the Minister of Railways, Honourable F. Cochrane, in February 1913, it was agreed that Port Nelson was the more desirable of the two ports on Hudson Bay, both by reason of its more southerly position and because of the more favourable approaches from a navigation standpoint.

to the Pas, by boat along the first 50 miles, by wagon and sleigh roads to the end of the first section. The second section can be supplied by Lake Winnipeg and the third by the bay, if desired. On the Churchill road, steam shovels will be required for about 35 miles near Split Lake: a little blasting only will be required on the Nelson road.

Timber for ties, piles, and temporary work will be found in sufficient quantity on the first 240 miles of the Churchill route. Beyond that point none can be had: on the Nelson route it can be procured all the way to the bay. On account of low crossings on other streams than the Saskatchewan, the Frog, and the Nelson, little piling will be required. Native timber is recommended as being less expensive. This is figured at 50 cents per foot on the Churchill route and 40 cents on the Nelson route.

Iron, track material, switches, etc., are calculated at Winnipeg prices plus freight to the Pas. Track-laying and ballasting are figured at $500 and $1000 respectively per mile, including side tracks and terminals: the estimate is based on the prices paid on the Transcontinental Railway.

Water tanks of 50,000 gallons capacity, costing $5000, 5000 feet of side track with a station every eight miles and accommodation for two sections' crews every alternate one, are among other estimates.

Four engine divisions are recommended on the Churchill route, three on the Nelson route, necessitating five sets of buildings in the former and four in the latter.

The following figures for the two routes are reproduced from Mr. Armstrong's report:

CHURCHILL ROUTE

	Unit	Quantity	Rate $	Amount $
Clearing	Acre	7,000	40.00	280,000
Grubbing	Acre	600	100.00	60,000
Grading	C. yd.	9,740,000	.50	4,870,000
Piling	L. ft.	180,000	.50	90,000
Timber in culverts	B. M.	3,250,000	40.00	130,000
Timber in bridges and trestles	B. M.	4,000,000	55.00	220,000

CHURCHILL ROUTE—*continued.*

	Unit	Quantity	Rate	Amount
			$	$
Iron in bridges and culverts	Lb.	2,600,000	.05	130,000
Steel rails	Ton	54,000	40.00	2,160,000
		18,000		720,000
Angle bars	Ton	2,680	50.00	134,000
		900		45,000
Bolts and nuts	Ton	454	80.00	36,320
Spikes	Ton	2,040	65.00	132,600
Ties	Each	1,700,000	.50	850,000
Track-laying	Mile	567	500.00	283,500
Switches (complete)	Set	300	250.00	75,000
Water tanks	Each	30	5,000.00	150,000
Bridges, steel	Lb.	3,700,000	.05	185,000
,, concrete	C. yd.	6,000	15.00	90,000
Ballasting	Mile	567	1,000.00	567,000
Telegraph line	Mile	477	300.00	143,100
		Total		10,586,520
Increase due to 80 lb. rail				765,000
				11,351,520
Station buildings, telegraph stations, section houses, round houses, locomotive and car repair shops, power plant, tools, warehouse at port, coal unloading plant			$1,700,000	
Two 4,000,000 bush. cap. fireproof elevators			4,000,000	
Yard facility at terminals			320,000	
Engineering, law costs, and contingencies, ten per cent.			1,737,152	7,757,152
				19,108,672
Harbour work, piers, dredging, exclusive of lighthouse and buoying				6,675,000
		Grand total		$25,783,672

The reader will kindly note that the grand total is ours, also that the second figures in the items of steel rails and angle bars have been added in the text of Mr. Armstrong by Mr. Butler, which figures added make up the $765,000.00 increase. The same remarks apply to the data of the Nelson route which now follows.

NELSON ROUTE

	Unit	Rate $	Quantity	Amount $
Clearing	Acre	40.00	7,000	280,000
Grubbing	Acre	100.00	600	60,000
Grading	C. yd.	.40	7,500,000	3,000,000
Piling	L. ft.	.40	200,000	80,000
Timber in culverts	B. M.	40.00	2,800,000	112,000
Timber in bridges and trestles	B. M.	55.00	3,200,000	176,000
Iron in bridges and culverts	Lb.	.05	2,100,000	105,000
Steel rails	Ton	40.00	45,500	1,820,000
			15,000	608,000
Angle bars	Ton	50.00	2,280	114,000
			800	40,000
Bolts and nuts	Ton	80.00	390	31,200
Spikes	Ton	65.00	1,740	113,100
Ties	Each	.40	1,450,000	580,000
Switches	Set	250.00	240	60,000
Track-laying	Mile	500.00	483	241,500
Water tanks	Each	5,000.00	25	125,000
Telegraph lines	Mile	300.00	410	123,000
Bridges, steel	Lb.	.05	9,400,000	650,000
,, concrete	C. yd.	15.00	12,000	180,000
Ballasting	Mile	1,000.00	483	483,000
Total				8,333,800
Increase due to 80 lb. rails				648,000
				8,981,800
Station buildings, telegraph cabins, section houses, round houses, repair shops, locomotive and car, tools, power plant, warehouse at port, coaling plant			$1,647,600	
Two 4,000,000 bush. fire-proof elevators			4,000,000	
Yard facility at terminals			320,000	
Law costs and contingencies. Engineering, ten per cent.			1,476,940	7,444,540
				16,426,340
Harbour work, piers and dredging, exclusive of lighthouse and buoy				5,065,000
Grand total				[1] 21,491,340

A comparison between the two ports proposed for terminals on the bay is next given. In view of the controversy as to

[1] A supplementary report tabled in the spring of 1912 shows that the season's work from the Pas to Thicket Portage has reduced the cost of construction by $300,000.

the choice between the two ports, the reading of this part of Mr. Armstrong's report is so interesting and the information supplied so important, that we have deemed advisable to reproduce it *in extenso*.

"FORT CHURCHILL

"Port Churchill is at the mouth of the Churchill River where the river passes through a large tidal flat or lagoon mostly dry at low tide, except near the outlet to the sea. The lagoon is surrounded by hills consisting of rock at the sea outlet and of sand and gravel further up the river. The only available situation for docks at present is out near Cape Merry, with the railway terminals from two to three miles up stream and the town-site from three to five miles up stream. Another town-site is available on the west side, but it would be somewhat difficult to get railway and dock sites.

"There is no possibility of improving the Churchill River so as to give inland communication by water, owing to its shallowness over its many wide and frequent rapids. The neighbourhood of Port Churchill is practically destitute of all forest growth for miles in all directions, the vegetation being restricted to mosses and patches of coarse grasses along the edges of the water areas.

"The main fresh water supply is obtained from the numerous small lakes in the neighbourhood, and is of excellent quality.[1] The tidal flats are thickly strewn with boulders, some so large as to be visible above high water.

"The main current in the harbour is along the indicated channel of the Churchill River, being approximately down the centre of the lagoon, but striking more against the eastern side towards the harbour mouth. With the ebb tide the current attains a velocity of from six to eight miles per hour creating a somewhat difficult entrance for low-powered ships.

[1] Andrew Graham wrote in 1771: "No springs near, drink snow water nine months of the year. In summer keep three draught horses to haul water."

The local pilots prefer to bring in their ships with the incoming tides.

"It is quite useless for anything but a steam vessel to attempt the entrance at any other time. The current with the incoming tide is much less, probably not exceeding 4 miles per hour. The highest tide observed was 13½ feet, and the lowest 8 feet, both probably being subject to modification with a longer series of observations. The water is always more or less salt near the entrance. At low tide fresh water may be obtained in the Churchill channel opposite the Hudson Bay Company's post, but when the tide is in this cannot be done.

"The harbour usually freezes over about November 15. The open sea also freezes over during the winter four or five miles out from Churchill. The usual date for the opening of the harbour is about June 19. This last spring the harbour opened on June 7, or about ten days earlier than usual. The ice lay off the coast and harbour this year, preventing the return of the survey party until July 13, when a start was made for York.

"Five days more were lost by the ice pack off Cape Churchill extending about thirty miles out to sea, the boat crew declining to venture outside of this. The boat in use was only a small sailing coast boat not well adapted to ice-work. Probably no serious difficulty would have been experienced by a steamer making Churchill within a few days of the opening of the harbour on June 7. At intervals between June 7 and July 13, ice would be drifted back into the harbour by north winds. This ice floating up and down the harbour on the strong currents existing there constitutes a serious inconvenience and danger to ships at anchor and to docks and other works which may be constructed along the shore. The harbour has been reported on occasions to have been blocked by ice as late as August owing to long-continued north winds. This liability of the harbour to being filled with loose heavy ice drifting up and down with the strong currents will need to be seriously considered in choosing the type of docks to be built here. As shown on the chart, the

direction of the current tends to throw the drifting ice against the east shore, the only place for docks at the present time. The ice, however, does not jam here very much, but is swept on out by the strong current. Jams more frequently occur on the west side between the police barracks and Cockrill's Point.

"At the present time very little shelter can be had at low tide by any ship drawing over 18 or 20 feet of water. Space to accommodate two or three ships of this size might be had, but anything larger would have to anchor almost in front of the entrance, which being about three-quarters of a mile, allows the full force of the seas to be felt. The seas enter the harbour with sufficient force to cause a heavy swell to be felt throughout the harbour; in fact it is reported that at times it is impossible for the smaller boats to cross the harbour for two or three days at a time. The bottom, consisting of mud, affords a fairly good holding ground for anchors.

"The material forming the harbour bottom is mud, thickly strewn with boulders of all sizes, and is probably a deposit from the Churchill River.

"Excavating for ships' berths close inshore to avoid the heavy drift ice will probably encounter solid rock, as the solid rock in several places runs to the water edge.

"Stone for construction purposes is plentiful. Marble, if you like to use it. All timber will have to be brought in either by rail or by ship.

"Fort Churchill, being practically upon the open sea, can only be defended by strong forts and batteries placed in the immediate neighbourhood of the port itself.

"Port Nelson

"The chart or map accompanying this report has been drawn to a scale of 4000 feet to 1 inch, as being best adapted for the purpose of giving a comprehensive view of the general situation at Port Nelson. Lines are shown on the chart inclosing the portion which was found open all last season;

other lines showing the portion where the ice did not attain a greater thickness than 10 inches. The shore line is plotted in from a traverse of the shores. Wherever the ice was of sufficient strength, the sounding was done through holes, the method of locating being indicated on the chart. The soundings in the open water portion were taken from a boat hired from the Hudson Bay Company at York Factory, and were taken in May and June, after the ice had gone out. This portion of the work was accomplished under great difficulties, as only five small buoys could be obtained to mark ten miles of river.

" The boat, which was the best obtainable, was the usual coast boat of very shallow draft and clumsy rig, but endowed with special qualities in the manner of drifting.

" Owing to this propensity and to the fact that the small buoys were not visible from one to the other, some difficulty was experienced in keeping the proper course. However, after ten days' or two weeks' hard work a sufficient amount of information was obtained to enable us to state with certainty that a good channel exists in which a ship drawing 26 feet might safely enter at all stages of the tide. Mr. R. D. Fry, the engineer in charge of the party, believes this chart to be a conservative representation of the actual conditions at Port Nelson, and that more extended surveys with the proper equipment will probably show a more favourable situation.

" In order to get the best results it will be necessary to have a good strong boat equipped with power, preferably a good sea-going tug which could be fitted to burn either coal or wood, with a dozen large-sized buoys and fifty or sixty smaller ones to mark the channel and points to be sounded.

" Port Nelson is at the mouth of the Nelson River, while York Factory is situated at the mouth of the Hayes River, about fifteen or eighteen miles from Port Nelson.

" The site at the mouth of the Hayes was chosen by the Hudson Bay Company on account of the better communication with a greater number of inland posts, and also being a much smaller stream, was not so difficult to navigate.

Building the Hudson Bay Railway

Photo by Dr. W. Sinclair, 1914.

"A great deal of tracking had to be done on both rivers, and the Hayes being much smaller, offered less trouble in crossing and re-crossing to take advantage of paths to tow from. The Nelson River is known locally as the North River, and Port Nelson is named by the British Admiralty as York Roads. Hudson Bay vessels crossing to York Factory with supplies anchor about 15 or 20 miles from the post in York Roads. The site of York Factory was not chosen on account of its accessibility from the sea, but entirely on account of the easier communication with inland posts. The Nelson River proper may be said to end at Flamboro Head, which is the approximate limit to which the tide reaches. The estuary is a wide tidal flat with the main channel running approximately down the centre, finally discharging into an open sea abreast of Beacon Point, some 25 miles from Flamboro Head. At Flamboro Head the banks rise sheer from the water edge to a height of 100 to 125 feet. From this point they gradually diminish in height on both sides of the river, until at Sam's Creek on the north, and Beacon Point on the south, they are about ten feet above the water. The north shore is of clay with a sufficient fall for drainage, and covered with a fair growth of spruce.

"A good site for terminals and town may be had in the vicinity of the point marked on the chart. Above this point the banks come higher and much more abrupt.

"The south shore is also of clay with a good slope for drainage, but at the present time, is covered with a very heavy growth of moss, rendering it very wet. An abundant supply of fresh water may be had either from the Nelson River itself or from various smaller streams and lakes in its vicinity.

"The main current when the tide is ebbing is along the main channel, the current over the flats running approximately parallel to it. As the water lowers the currents over the flats converge more and more upon the main current till at low tide they are approximately at right angles to, and approaching it. On the ebb tide, the current flows at the

rate of about 3½ miles per hour, being strongest at the mouth abreast of Beacon Point. Under favourable conditions the current here might rise as high as 4 miles per hour. So great is the discharge of the Nelson River that a perceptible current may be noticed several miles out to sea. With the incoming tide a current of about 2½ miles is obtained.

"During the observations, extending from March 20 to June 10, the lowest tide observed was 6.9 feet and the highest 10.9. A longer series of observations will probably establish greater extremes.

"The Admiralty charts give ordinary spring tides as ranging from 10 to 14 feet. It is probable, however, that any rise greater than 12 feet may be classed as an occurrence out of the ordinary and due probably to some particular combination of wind and tide. The tides were found to be very variable, due, no doubt, to the comparative shallowness of the water. This will require a long series of observations before accurate tide tables can be prepared. This condition is not peculiar to Port Nelson, but applies generally to the tides in Hudson Bay.

"Salt water is never found above Beacon Point, except when a very strong easterly gale is blowing with the incoming tide, when a slightly brackish taste may be detected two or three miles above Beacon Point. When the tide is ebbing fresh water is obtained far out to sea. Salt water is never obtained within many miles of the point selected for the terminals.

"About December 20 the river is usually frozen over at Seal Island or Flamboro Head. From this time on the ice gradually creeps down the estuary and out from the shore line until the first half of the month of April. About this date the weather moderated to such an extent that the thawing through the day counterbalanced the freezing at night and the ice began to recede towards Flamboro Head, the estuary being usually again clear of ice by May 15. The ice is broken up into large floes by the rising tide, and is borne off out to sea by the ebb tide. Owing to the appreciable current of the Nelson River being felt so far out to sea very

little of this ice ever drifts back again. Between May 15 and June 1, the upper Nelson ice breaks up and passes down the centre of the estuary in the main channel, usually occupying from twenty-four to thirty-six hours in passing out to sea. During last winter no ice jams occurred inside of a line drawn from Beacon Point to Sam's Creek, and a careful scrutiny of the shore line after the snow and ice had disappeared failed to find any trace of its ever doing so. The photos accompanying this report give a fair representation of the usual ice conditions at Nelson. Last winter was a shade colder than average.

"The winter of 1878, an exceptionally mild winter, the channel remained open for 40 miles above Flamboro Head.

"During the freeze up in the fall, a considerable quantity of slush ice comes down from the Upper Nelson.

"Last winter at Seal Island and along the shore the ice attained a thickness of between 4½ and 5 feet. The average thickness at York Factory, where a record has been kept for many years, seems to be about 4 ft. 8 inches.

"During the winter more or less ice floats up and down the open channel with the tides, but being very scattered no jams ever occur.

"The anchorage being some nine or ten miles in from the mouth of the channel no serious sea is ever experienced which may cause trouble to anything larger than canoes or rowboats. The condition of the seas at Port Nelson will probably be found to resemble those experienced at Quebec on the St. Lawrence. The bottom is of sufficient stiffness to furnish a secure holding ground for anchors.

"The material in the flats consists of blue clay with an occasional pocket of coarse sand and gravel with boulders scattered thinly around. In the channel the material is a very stiff blue clay, affording excellent holding ground for anchors. Probably all of the material can be handled by dredges at a very low cost, and may be used for reclamation works around the docks. The bottom of the channel is swept clean and bare by the current of the Nelson, and is of so stiff a nature that the small anchor used by the survey, probably

weighing about 200 lbs., would frequently drag for some distance before taking hold. The material on the flats is not so hard on top, but becomes harder as depth is obtained.

" Stone for the construction of breakwaters and other works may be cheaply obtained. About 75,000 or 100,000 cubic yards may be picked up along the tidal flats in the shape of scattered boulders. Up the Nelson River, about 40 miles above Flamboro Head is a splendid quarry where any required quantity can be had, and landed cheaply at the works by means of the Nelson River.

" Piles in large quantities will be obtainable from various streams entering Nelson River and Hudson Bay.

" Cement and other materials, being brought in by water, should be comparatively cheap.

" The defence of Nelson from hostile fleets will be comparatively easy, the long, comparatively narrow channel approach being easily rendered impregnable by means of sea mines, and rendered otherwise dangerous by the removal or changing of buoys and other channel marks. Battleships which carry the extreme long range guns are of such a draft as to render it somewhat dangerous to manœuvre in less than 45 feet of water, thus preventing their closer approach than 15 or 18 miles, a distance considerably greater than the effective range of even the heaviest guns. The lighter ships which might approach closer carry correspondingly lighter guns. The establishment of strong batteries and forts at Sam's Creek would seem to be all that is necessary to render Port Nelson absolutely unassailable.

" It might be mentioned here in passing, the greatly increased difficulty a hostile fleet would have on blockading the Atlantic coast of Canada were the Hudson Bay route opened. The fact that ships may enter and leave Port Nelson all the year round is a fact worth remembering when the possibilities of war are considered." [1]

After reading the contents of this chapter, not a small number of persons will probably stare at the apparent simplicity of the whole project, and wonder why its construction

[1] *Report of the Hudson's Bay Railway Surveys*, 1909, p. 17 *et seq.*

was not undertaken sooner. Possibly the several opinions which we shall read in the next chapter of this book may throw some light on the extraordinary position assumed for such a long time by the Canadian Government.[1]

[1] *See* Appendix G for what Dr. William Sinclair of the Pas has to say of the work going on at Port Nelson.

Further complementary particulars of the Hudson Bay Railway will be found in Appendix D.

The following taken from the *Winnipeg Telegram* of January 20, 1915, shows what work has been accomplished on the line during the year 1914:—

"Ottawa, Ontario, January 20.—The final revision of the Hudson Bay Railway route from the Pas to Port Nelson leaves the length of the line 424 miles, only 22 miles longer than an air line. For the distance this is probably the most direct route in Canada.

"Last April a tote road was started from the end of the steel to Port Nelson. In December it had reached Kettle Rapids, and by the middle of February will be at Port Nelson. Next summer supplies can be teamed in from the end of the steel to the bay. A year ago there were 130 miles completely graded and 25 miles partially graded. This year's operations have extended the complete grade to mileage 240, and 54 miles further on is partially graded, leaving only a little over 100 miles to the bay. In 1913, 103 miles of track were laid, and by the end of this month trains will be able to run to mileage 214. A telegraph line has also been built to mileage 175, showing 155 miles of wire strung this season. In addition seven standard tanks have been built and six trestles.

"From the progress made this year the grade should be completed into Nelson in 1915, and the tracks and other equipment placed in readiness for the 1916 crop. The work of taking in supplies, completing the tote road and a certain amount of construction at the bay is being carried on this winter so that no time will be lost when the season opens for the next year's work."

The following is from the *Pas Herald and Mining News* of April 9, 1915:—

"To Port Nelson by 1916, if all goes well, is the latest expression of Hon. Frank Cochrane, minister of railways and canals. The engineers hardly think it possible that a year from next fall will see completion of the road, but the minister says it must be done. Five million and a half dollars have been provided for this year's work, three millions on the railway proper and a million and a half for the Port Nelson terminals. 'The contract for the steel bridge over the Manitou rapids has been let,' says Mr. Cochrane, 'the other bridge is not completely worked out. The engineering difficulties have yet to be settled. The first bridge is to be in place by September 15th this year, so that the rails may be laid as far as it is graded before the snow flies next fall. I think the road will be into Port Nelson by 1916, but the engineers think we will have hard work to do it.

"'Regarding the terminals at Port Nelson, the deep water channel, about a third of a mile wide, up the middle of the estuary, is separated

from the shore by the wide tidal flats, over which the water is from one to three feet at low water. It is proposed to construct the docks parallel to the deep water channel and distant about one thousand feet therefrom, the intervening space being dredged about 20 feet at low water. The docks will consist of a cigar-shaped area surrounded with timber cribs and filled in with dredged material. The area will be about 500 feet wide and three-quarters of a mile long in extreme dimensions. Along the face of the docks the steamer berths will be dredged to about 30 feet deep. The elevator will be situated on the above described area with adequate trackage. The docks will be connected with the shore by a series of crib piers, of large area to resist ice thrust, connected up with steel pans. Until earlier work is done, dredging will not be undertaken. This year we have our men and plant up there and expect to make considerable progress.'

"With reference to the number of ships going into Hudson Bay last year, Mr. Cochrane states there were 37. The first steamer reached Port Nelson in good time. He also states a twenty-foot depth of water holds good for the fifteen miles outward from the river, but ships of greater draught could make it on high tide.

"In the year 1913 Port Nelson was a barren waste, inhabited by Indians and a few government surveyors and engineers who arrived in the fall of the previous year to lay out the lines of work on the terminals. On the 5th of August, 1913, the steamer *Bonaventure* came into port with a dozen men and H. F. Hazen, engineer, in charge. The boat anchored two miles off shore and the ship's long-boats were used in making a landing. At this time there was no landing dock or means of handling heavy construction material. Three log buildings constituted all the shelters in the place. On August 6th, the steamer *Bellaventure* arrived with 200 workmen. The men were at once put to work making a landing dock, building log shacks and bunk houses and clearing part of the town-site of small brush. Both steamers were unloaded of freight and sailed away in the latter end of the month. No ice was encountered on the trip out from Halifax, and none on the return trip. With the departure of the steamers the men got down to real work, and they accomplished wonders before the winter set in. Everything was made ready for the big gang to follow in the winter and spring of 1914. With the coming of these men the population of Port Nelson was swelled to a thousand. Prospects are that a thousand more men will be put to work there in 1915. At the present time there are five large warehouses, each 165 feet long, numerous dwelling houses, several dining camps, each 180 feet long with seating accommodation for 400 men. An electric light plant is one of the permanent fixtures besides the wireless station. In addition there are a number of tugs and lighters in the harbour, and several more under construction now. The big dry dock is well under way and the excavation is done. In the yards there are about 30 miles of railway laid. The work is progressing most satisfactorily, and hopes are held that the steamship docks, two in number and extending towards the bay for a mile, will be completed and ready for handling freight from the cars to the steamer hold, by next year."

CHAPTER XII

OPINIONS ON HUDSON BAY ROUTE

CERTAINLY the greatest and most disinterested booster for the Hudson Bay route that Canada has had to this day is Dr. Robert Bell, ex-chief of the Canadian Geological Service. Our readers have read in a previous chapter his opinion of the possibilities of navigation in Hudson Bay and Strait. In the *Scottish Geographic Magazine* of March, 1912, appeared an article from this gentleman's pen, in which the attention of the public was called to the fact that for two hundred years the Hudson's Bay Company had used the strait and bay road as the most convenient road to the Canadian north-west. Only because the western prairies had not been inhabited until quite recently, and also because the people of the east did not feel very well disposed towards the project, had there been any delay in utilising it. It was Dr. Bell's further opinion that the railroad to the bay's shores could be operated very economically by some hydro-electric force, generated and maintained by the falls and the rapids on the Churchill and Nelson Rivers and their tributaries.

In this statement of a man eminently qualified to speak authoritatively on the subject by reason of the several trips which he made to Hudson Bay, during which he studied very thoroughly, not only the ice conditions but all the other natural features, we have a most complete and true digest of the whole question. The route has been found feasible for two hundred years; only the selfish sentiments of a portion of the country's population, blinded by a false appreciation of the ultimate results of the project, have retarded the progress of the whole Dominion by the saving to its inhabitants of millions of dollars had the railway been built sooner. For, as Sir Wilfrid Laurier expressed it in its announcement at Niagara Falls in 1908, " the future of Canada is too great

for any one part of its territory to be hurt by the development of the routes of commerce of any other part."

But before, at the same time, and since Dr. Bell expressed his unwavering faith in the northern route many have been the men who have come forward and dared publish their belief in the ultimate result of man's ability to conquer the icy elements of that route, no more terrible and difficult than steam, electricity, air, and other natural forces and obstacles which human perseverance has successively subdued and made serve its own ends.

The following opinions, gathered at random, I reproduce here in the thought that they will be read with interest by those persons who are prepared to study out the problem of the Hudson Bay route with all preconceived ideas first eliminated.

" The immediate opening up of a railway to one or other of the Hudson Bay ports is of the deepest concern to all farmers of the area tributary to such a railway—an area which really at the present time includes all of Alberta, Saskatchewan, except a small south-eastern corner. Consequently, in my view, the Federal Government ought immediately to complete the railway from the Pas, the terminus of the Canadian Northern Railway, to Port Nelson."—J. L. Willis, bank inspector, Toronto, Spring 1912.

" When the Hudson Bay Railway is completed, the transportation problem in the west will be practically solved by the establishment of a comparatively short water route to the English market."—J. H. Sexsmith, M.P. for East Peterborough, July 1912.

" While I am prepared to admit that there remain great difficulties to be surmounted and many uncertainties in the way to be cleared, I feel confident that the scheme is perfectly feasible."—Hon. F. W. G. Haultain, leader of the Opposition, and for many years previous to the formation of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, Premier of the North-West Territories, August 1912.

" Undoubtedly there will be a large fish trade from the north, and valuable mineral deposits may be found along

the right of way, as happened in the case of the Ontario government road, making the line of incalculable wealth. Add to this that there is bound to be considerable through traffic, freight and passenger, and the element of risk is materially reduced." So is reported to have spoken, some time in October, 1912, Sir Donald Mann, vice-president of the Canadian Northern Railway, which company did its level best up to 1910 to obtain from the Federal Government the necessary subsidy and contract to proceed to the bay with their line ending at the Pas. No man, except possibly his friend and chief associate, Sir William Mackenzie, who has also always favoured the project, is better posted than Sir Donald Mann on the invasion of the north by the railway. It will be noticed that he places the importance of the road solely on the traffic originating from the natural resources of the district to be tapped.

"The Hudson Bay Railway will probably be like every other railway in the Dominion which has been managed on business principles. It will develop its own traffic. We ought not to start out, as many of us do, with the fear that any proposed railway may not pay, and hence we ought not to endeavour to promote it. In a country like ours all railways will pay their way if rightly managed. The Canadian Pacific we were told would never pay; but it is a fairly profitable institution. We were told that a national transcontinental would never pay, but we know better now. Of course, the Hudson Bay Railway will pay."—Victoria, B.C., *Colonist*, Summer 1912.

"Mr. Cochrane is taking hold of the road to the bay in a business-like manner. He has investigated the needs of the west this summer, and realises that the western farmers were right in their demand for a government-owned and operated road to the bay. It will probably take three years at the lowest estimate to open the road for traffic, and by that time every outlet from the west will be taxed to the utmost. Mr. Cochrane will have western sympathy in bending every effort to a speedy construction of the road to the bay."—*Grain Growers' Guide*, Winnipeg, Summer 1912.

" Preliminary reports from the Hudson Bay survey parties on board the government steamers which are investigating the ice and navigation conditions in Hudson Bay and the Straits this summer in connection with the proposed Hudson Bay Railway, are not very encouraging as to the safety and feasibility of the route, so it is reported. The ice conditions, especially in the straits, have been found to be unusually bad, exposing vessels to both serious danger and delay. While the desire for another outlet for western wheat and another ocean route to Europe is natural, the *Monetary Times* still thinks that the Hudson Bay route is entirely impracticable. Navigation would be hazardous, and only for a short period of the year. Even the St. Lawrence route, with all its recent improvements, cannot obtain sufficiently low insurance rates. What rates could be obtained, then, on the Hudson Bay route? The *Monetary Times* suggests that the Hudson Bay scheme be abandoned by the government, with a frank statement that the proposed route is too hazardous and quite impracticable."—The *Monetary Times*, Toronto, Summer 1912.

Honourable Frank Cochrane, who travelled by land to Port Nelson and crossed both the bay and the straits as the above lines were written, on his return to the capital, to the dismay of the *Monetary Times* and such-like publications, spoke enthusiastically of the project. " I have every faith in the scheme and I will push the Hudson Bay Road for all it is worth. We intend to make this a good road. We have a four-tenths grade. We are using eighty-pound rails. I believe that the Hudson Bay route will mean much to the west in the way of lower freight rates. It will be a leveller, east and west. Just consider how much cheaper iron, steel, and coal, for instance, from Sidney, could be shipped to the prairies. It will be of the greatest advantage to the east, and I believe eastern opposition is dying out. We found the bay free from ice. In fact, the only ice we saw to amount to anything was the bergs near Belle Isle, where all the Atlantic steamers encounter them. The straits are very wide, and with the aid of wireless I believe can be kept open

for a long period. Wireless stations and other aids to navigation will be established as soon as needed. . . . If the route was only open two months after the wheat of the west started to move, it would be worth while."

" Persistent efforts have been and are being made to discredit the Hudson Bay route as an available outlet for the products of Western Canada. That there are difficulties, there is no occasion to deny. But, taking them at their worst, in the light of the available information, they do not appear by any means insuperable. Hudson Bay and Hudson Straits are not unknown waters. The early settlements in the north-west were made through them, and no year has passed without ships challenging such dangers to navigation as may be found. What sailing vessels did, steamships can certainly accomplish with much more ease. Nor is there reason to doubt that modern aids to navigation will largely minimise, if not entirely eliminate, the risks braved by earlier mariners. Even should there be exceptionally bad years, these will be compensated by others that are usually favourable. Certainly the advantages that will come from the successful opening of the Hudson Bay route are well worth the expenditure necessary to give it a proper trial. That settlers will push their way in increasing numbers into that region is certain, and for them the opening up of the Hudson Bay navigation and of the adjacent territory would be a matter of supreme importance. Mr. Cochrane has returned from the North with every faith in the road, and his decision to expedite its construction will be generally approved."—*Toronto World*, Summer 1912.

Father Lefèvre, procurator of the missions and industrial schools under the Sisters of Charity, located between Fort M'Murray and the Arctic Red River, and who has travelled over the whole of Northern Canada, in the course of an interview in the early fall of the year 1912, said that the completion of the Hudson Bay route would open a virgin mineral, agricultural, and timber country. In his opinion, the route is feasible, and must facilitate commercial intercourse with the world's markets. The northern country, he added, is

full of black, white, red, cross and silver foxes, otter, marten, lynx, beaver, mink, and muskrat, while the streams literally teem with white fish and trout.

Even Dr. F. A. Cook of North Pole discovery fame is of the opinion that the Hudson Bay Railway will be very valuable to Canada, especially to the west.

"The Hudson Bay route is a certainty of the immediate future, so far as human possibilities go," said the *Manitoba Free Press* in the fall of 1912. "Ever since that time away back in the early eighties, when the Federal Government of the day garbled the favourable report of its expert, Commander Gordon, R.N., because its credit was engaged to the hilt on behalf of the C.P.R., this idea has received faint praise in the east and earnest support in the west. What threatened to become a sectional issue happily has been removed to the serene realm of accomplished fact. For there is no doubt of the early completion of the Hudson Bay Railway. The present administration appears to be eager to push to a finish the work of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Mr. Cochrane, Minister of Railways, who made his trip over the route somewhat sceptical, has returned to Ottawa sincerely convinced of its feasibility and commercial practicability. Perhaps too much attention has been drawn by its anxious advocates in the Canadian west to the grain-clearing feature of the Hudson Bay route. Too little has been said of its vast possibilities as a clearing house for imperial trade; as a high seas avenue for bringing British-made goods into this country, as well as a dump-route for our grain. . . . Largely because the manufacturing resources of the east are already overtaxed to supply the immediate wants of the ever-expanding west, the need of the Hudson Bay route has become national rather than sectional. With the inevitable reduction in duties on British-made goods, the inward flow of home-country trade will in time equal and perhaps exceed the outward flow of prairie-grown wheat. It is an aspect of the situation which calls for warehouses as well as elevators at Fort Churchill and Port Nelson—twin Bristols of the North American hinterland."

"The Hudson Bay Railway must and will be built. The croaking of eastern financial papers will but serve to emphasize the necessity for such a route. It has been proven beyond all doubt that the Hudson Bay and Straits are navigable for four months in the year. In that limited period, which may be extended by properly protected vessels, as much freight could be carried away by the fleets of ocean tramps which would flock to the terminus of the railway as can be carried by the shipping on the great lakes in the six-month period."—*Yorkton Enterprise*, Winter 1913.

"Should the Hudson Bay Railway turn out to be the success that it is expected, and should navigation of Hudson Bay prove no more difficult than in the past—and the difficulties are certain to decrease with the greater knowledge of tides, currents, and winds, through practical experience—an entirely new field will be opened up to the traders and manufacturers of the east. Water-borne freight can be carried very cheaply to the Hudson Bay terminal of the railway, and the short railway haul will enable merchants and traders of the maritime provinces to enter into active competition with those of Montreal and Toronto—with advantages on the side of the provinces by the sea. In addition to giving a cheap outlet to the wheat of the west, the railway would also give to the easterner a cheap route to the western consumer. It may be claimed that if all the 'ifs' were obliterated and that neither danger nor delay were likely to attend the voyage through Hudson Bay, there would be no return cargo for the vessels carrying eastern products to the west. This would not be the case. There are certain points to be considered. There is no likelihood of the farmers of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, or even Prince Edward's Island becoming great growers of wheat. . . . Wheat would furnish a beginning for return cargoes from the west, and time would arrange an interchange of commodities. Much will happen before the Hudson Bay problem is proved out, but there can be no doubt that with even reasonable safety of navigation, the new route could be made of great value to the maritime provinces."—St. John, N.B., *Standard*, Winter 1912–13.

"'Port Nelson open in January' seems a good vote for the all-year-round navigation of Hudson Bay. Although H. T. Hazen's report, *re* Nelson as a port, is still in the hands of Hon. F. Cochrane, it is learned that when Mr. Hazen left Nelson in the month of January the bay was then absolutely open and the only ice appearing was along the shores. The promoters of the North Railway Co., here, declare that navigation on the bay from Nelson to Nottawa, the foot of James Bay, will be open practically all the year round with the proper kind of vessels."—Charlottetown, P.E.I., *Patriot*, Winter 1912-13.

"In considering this Hudson Bay project more or less academically, as it has been viewed for many years past, all attention has been devoted to its use as an avenue for moving grain from Western Canada to tide water, for conveyance to foreign markets, while little notice has been given to an equally important phase of the problem—the utilisation of the route as an outlet for imports for western commerce. In the great wheat-growing belt all the immense prairies are being covered with settlers at the rate of hundreds of thousands annually, the whole of whose requirements, except what they raise from the land, will have to be conveyed to them by railroads. The establishing of a Hudson Bay route will ensure to these growing communities, and to others yet unborn, an alternative such as, for instance, the Mississippi River affords to the communities which can be reached by water carriage along its banks; and even with the handicap of the ice pack for some months, there ought to be some possibilities of enormous expansion in this region. The manufacturers of the maritime provinces should be able to place their products in Western Canada by this means at rates at present unapproachable."—P. T. M'Grath in *Review of Reviews*, Spring 1913.

In the *Flower of the North*, James Oliver Curwood, the American novelist who has chosen the Hudson Bay country as the scene for several of his books, gives quite a vivid picture of what results will be attained by the Hudson Bay Road, when he gets his hero, Phillip Whittemore, to exclaim: "See

that red line? That's the new railroad to Hudson Bay. It is well above Le Pas now, and its builders plan to complete it by next spring. It is the most wonderful piece of railroad building on the American continent, Greggy — wonderful because it has been neglected so long. Something like a hundred million people have been asleep to its enormous value, and they are just waking up now. This road, cutting across four hundred miles of wilderness, is opening up a country half as big as the United States, in which more mineral wealth will be dug during the next fifty years than will ever be taken from Yukon or Alaska. It is shortening the route from Montreal, Duluth, Chicago, and the middle west to Liverpool and other European ports by a thousand miles. It means the making of a navigable sea out of Hudson Bay, cities on its shores, and great steel foundries close to the Arctic circle, where there is coal and iron enough to supply the world for hundreds of years. That's only a small part of what the road means. . . . Lakes and rivers—hundreds of them—thousands of them, Greggy, there are more than three thousand lakes between here and civilisation and within forty miles of the new railroad. And nine out of ten of these lakes are so full of fish that the bears along 'em smell fishy. Whitefish, Gregson—whitefish and trout. There is a fresh-water area represented on that map three times as large as the whole of the five Great Lakes, and yet the Canadians and the government have never wakened up to what it means. There's a fish supply in this northland large enough to supply the world, and that little rim of lakes that I've mapped out along the edge of the coming railroad represents a money value of millions."

"The export of dressed beef by this cool northern route would give additional value to the north-west prairies, north of where wheat is grown. For heavy or bulky imports the short route by Hudson Bay would stand unrivalled. Most of the railway iron and coal required in the north-west could be brought in the vessels returning agricultural products. To the north-west this route presents advantages offered by no other. By this route immigrants from Europe could reach

their destination on the Saskatchewan and Peace Rivers almost as soon and as cheaply as they could reach Western Ontario via Quebec, and much cheaper than via New York."—*Calgary News Telegram*, Spring 1912.

The following statement, reported to have been made by G. C. Hurdy, one of the largest millers of Minneapolis, to the *News Telegram* of Calgary, on his return from the coast in the spring of 1913, is one of the best and no doubt most disinterested boosts which the Hudson Bay Road has yet received, as compared with the Panama Canal. " People in Vancouver," Mr. Hurdy said, " are somewhat alarmed over the statement by the Hudson Bay railroad officials that grain, shipped by way of Vancouver through the Panama, will become heated in the south and will shrink to such an extent that shippers will not use that route and will ship the crop to Hudson Bay ports, thence to Europe. If wheat is affected by the heat of the Panama country you can depend upon the shippers of the west using the cooler route to ship it to the foreign market. A shrinkage would mean a great loss to them, and, according to men who should know, there is little doubt but that the heat of the Panama is to be dreaded. The Hudson Bay railroad is bound to be a great competitor with the G.T.P. and the C.N.R., for both these roads and the C.P.R. are confident that the Panama will make little difference to the shipment of wheat and that conditions will prove that the safest and best route to send the shipments is over eastern lines. In Vancouver they try to laugh at the possibility of shrinkage on the trip south through the Panama, but they are not aware that shipments have been made around the Horn to Europe and that the heat has so affected the grain that a great loss has been suffered by the shippers on account of the wheat getting heated and shrinking to a great extent. Whether this will happen when the Panama is opened remains to be seen, but there is a glaring possibility that the wheat will shrink, and if it does, the Panama route will be disregarded and the western ports will not realise what they are now very jubilant over. In fact, if there is any difficulty at all found with the Panama route, the Hudson Bay route

will be taken almost exclusively, for it is hundreds of miles shorter than the route by the great lakes and across the east, and the Hudson Bay railway is leaving nothing undone to cover the great wheat-growing country of the west with its network of lines. In fact, I am inclined to think that within the next two years the wheat shippers of Western Canada will be getting cheaper rates, and will be shipping the mighty crops of this country over lines leading to Hudson Bay, and thence to Europe by an excellent steamship service."

The following is a part of the speech reproduced from Hansard which Mr. Foster of the county of King's in one of the maritime provinces delivered in the House of Commons in the spring of the year 1913. It is to be noted that Mr. Foster travelled into the waters and country that he speaks of, in 1912. " I am of the opinion that the Hudson Bay route is navigable for four or four and a half months in the year, and that any expenditure which this or any succeeding government may make with regard to the extension of a railway into that section of Canada in order to make that route available, will in the future result in immense good to the country." The honourable gentleman then gives particulars of the respective positions of Fort Churchill and Port Nelson to the Peace River Valley and other parts of Western Canada, showing that these ports are fifty-eight miles closer to Liverpool than New York. A United States consul has described " the spruce belt of Canada as running from Labrador north-westerly to Alaska, a stretch of land in area some fifty-four miles larger than the state of New York and possessing untold millions of feet of timber—spruce, fir, pine and birch." Mr. Foster tells of the 3000 miles of inland navigable waterways, which may be connected by a short line of railway only 30 miles in length; of the fact that wheat has been successfully grown within 16 miles of the arctic circle in the Mackenzie Valley, and predicts for the northern section of Canada a wonderful future. In his opinion the spending of a few millions of dollars on the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway is the precursor of vaster expenditures in the same part of the country. And

he goes on: "From what study I have given to this subject I am profoundly enthusiastic over the great possibilities of this northern country. I am profoundly impressed with the belief that any expenditure wisely made by this government or by succeeding governments cannot but contribute to the future development of the country." Referring to what another member of the House, Mr. German of Welland, had said a few moments before about the pseudo non-navigability of the Hudson Bay route, he adds: "We know from personal observation that we have found greater obstacles in the straits of Belle Isle where steamers operate in the early part of the summer than we found going through the Hudson Bay Straits on our trip last year. . . . It must not be forgotten that instead of a day ten or twelve hours long, they have in that north country a day of nineteen or twenty hours and at some seasons of the year they have not more than three or four hours of night."

In the report of W. Thibaudeau, civil engineer, "on exploratory survey of country between Fort Churchill and Le Pas, in connection with Hudson Bay route, Ottawa, May 10, 1907," the following information is of special interest: "A railway from Le Pas on the Saskatchewan to Churchill on Hudson Bay would be of the greatest commercial advantage for the people of the west and north-west for the following reasons: The average saving in rail transportation for Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, via Churchill, as against Montreal to Liverpool, would be 970 miles; from Montreal, via Belle Isle, 2761 miles; from Montreal, via Cape Race, 2927 miles; from New York, 3079 miles. The freight upon grain from the wheat belt to Hudson Bay would approximate 10 cents a bushel, the same as to Port Arthur; the additional 15 cents from there to the Atlantic seaboard would be saved to the farmer, and this of itself represents a fair profit to the wheat-grower. Assuming an export trade of 20,000,000 of bushels, which can be easily handled in two months of the season by the proposed railway, the saving of 15 cents a bushel, being the difference in cost of freight from Port Arthur to the Atlantic seaboard, would amount to $3,000,000. A

very important feature in connection with a railway which secures quick access to the sea is with relation to the shipping of cattle to the European markets; this great industry is at present seriously handicapped in consequence of the long journey to be endured under present conditions. It is admitted, as well as a well-recognised fact, that cattle shipped to the Atlantic coast arrive at the shipping port in poor condition, emaciated by long days of rail travel. It is also admitted that on the sea journey they gain rather than lose in flesh, if put on board in good condition. Experience proves that after three days of rail travel cattle will deteriorate; that three days is about the limit of the time during which they can travel and maintain the condition in which they are placed on board. This being so, cattle could be transported to Fort Churchill without loss in flesh, and the voyage to Liverpool would improve this condition rather than the contrary. Therefore this great industry alone would find in the Fort Churchill route a solution of the difficulty under which those engaged in the business of cattle shipping now labour. . . . Upon the 82,000 head of cattle shipped to Montreal from the west during the past season, the saving in freight alone, $6 a head, or in round figures $650,000, would be equal to about 20 per cent. of the selling price."

"The successful opening of this route will be the signal for wonderful development in regions that a while ago were regarded as practically worthless. Incidentally the shortening of distance and reduction of freight charges to the Atlantic seaboard may be expected to have some effect upon transportation on this side of the line. American lines will have to improve their facilities and their efficiency to keep pace with Canadian enterprise."—*Minneapolis Tribune*, Summer 1913.

"Only practical experience for a series of seasons can show the average period for which the route will be open at moderate insurance rates, for transatlantic freight carriers. In any case there will undoubtedly be a growing coasting traffic between Hudson Bay ports and that at James Bay, from whence the Quebec Government, with federal assistance, will provide

a railway route to the ports of the St. Lawrence, which are available for ocean steamers for at least seven months in the year."—*Canada, London, England,* Summer 1913.

" It is said here that the Hudson Bay enterprise is of special importance to Canada. It is scarcely of secondary importance to the United States. It will shorten the rail haul for the grain raised in the American north-west and destined for Europe, as well as that raised in the Canadian west. . . . Atlantic coast ports in the United States will have few, if any, advantages over Hudson Bay ports in export shipments of grain for a short season every year, when the projected railroad and terminal facilities shall have been completed. Very short will be the navigable season on the Hudson Bay, but it is expected to be long enough to move the surplus grain of the American north-west and the Canadian west. . . . Another wonderful dream in world development is about to be realised."—*The Christian Science Monitor,* Boston, Summer 1913.

" Hudson Bay projects far into the interior of Canada, and, if it can be utilised, brings the great wheat area into close connection with the European market. Its ports are nearer Liverpool than is Montreal, and the resources of modern transportation ought to be able easily to overcome obstacles that appeared insurmountable in the older days of sailing vessels dependent on favourable winds. As a matter of fact trade is to-day being carried on in waters that are even less navigable than Hudson Bay was ever reputed to be. The bay itself is a prolific fishing ground, and this also will be an inestimable boon to the western provinces."—*Toronto World,* Fall 1913.

" But however great things in and around this vast inland sea, of nearly 500,000 square miles, they have been left practically undeveloped till now. The railway that is being built, while primarily to carry the wheat from the west, is destined to do so far more for the Dominion. It will start a trade in and around Hudson Bay that will result in industries not yet dreamed of by the most optimistic. Great cities will spring up, lands now a barren waste will be cultivated and

A Sample of Fish, Northern Manitoba

made productive, and along the Hudson Bay Railway new fields of silver, gold, and other valuable minerals will be developed to add wealth to the nation. Keep your eyes upon that new land, for they are getting ready to do things worth while."—Anson A. Gard in *Canadian Magazine*, Winter 1913-14.

"It is a big work the government has undertaken, but one that is rich in possibilities of usefulness. The Hudson Bay route will greatly relieve the pressure on the Great Lakes route, and tend to act as an equaliser of freight rates. It will, on the other hand, provide a short route from British ports to the west for certain classes of heavy freight that now must come to us over a long and costly rail haul. Moreover, the route should have the effect of opening up the rich fisheries of Hudson Bay, until now all but untouched."—*Winnipeg Telegram*, Summer 1913.

"Among the products of Eastern Canada which should find a ready market in the growing west, via Hudson Bay, are coal and iron. This opens up a bright prospect of trade development between Cape Breton and Middle Canada. It is quite possible that within the next few years there may be a line of steamers plying between Sydney Harbour and Port Nelson carrying cargoes both ways."—Sydney, N.S., *Daily Post*, Summer 1913.

Ex-Chief Engineer Armstrong is of the opinion that when the Hudson Bay Railway is completed to Port Nelson, it will be found necessary to immediately lay a second track to take care of the traffic which will offer. The Canadian Government is no doubt impressed with the same probability, and for this reason, from the beginning, is using 80 lb. rails and laying out extremely long sidings at short distances from one another.

The opinions from various sources which have been published in this chapter, while supplementing those dealing with the navigation of the bay and strait proper, will help the reader to form an opinion of the good features of the project. To be complete one should probably publish also the opinion of those who have spoken against it: their number is so small, however, and the arguments that they have advanced are so

evidently prejudiced, when, indeed, they are not barefacedly and intentionally false, that we have deemed it advisable not to reproduce any here in addition to that of the *Monetary Times* quoted for the sake of comparison in one instance. Without a single exception almost, none of the men who have spoken or written against the Hudson Bay route have personally visited the country through which it passes or the bay and strait, while a great number of those whose opinions have been printed in the foregoing pages have seen with their own eyes the conditions of which they speak or write.

CHAPTER XIII

GEOLOGICAL FEATURES

THE chief characteristic of the country extending almost from the northern limit of the old province of Manitoba to Hudson Bay is the muskeg, which is the name universally used to designate what would otherwise be called wet barrens, such as are found in the Lake Superior country and in Nova Scotia. Its depth varies from a few inches along the rivers and lakes to half a dozen feet upward in the worst swamps. Where sufficient slope for drainage can be secured, it is an easy matter to dry the muskeg, which is usually underlaid by a fairly good soil of clay mixed with pebbles, boulders, when not limestone, thus furnishing good foundations for buildings and other heavy edifices.

It follows that the relief of the country is low and unpronounced, the whole surface sloping somewhat evenly and regularly towards Hudson Bay: the plain so formed is nothing but deep sea clay, deposited there by the sea following the disappearance of the glaciers in prehistoric times. The highest point is at Cranberry portage which, at the height of land, forms the only break in the otherwise complete water communication between the Saskatchewan River, the Nelson River, and the Churchill River, by way of the Goose River which discharges into Sturgeon River, and the Grass River which is a tributary of the Nelson River: the elevation at Cranberry Lake is 935 feet above the sea. The lowest area is near Sipiwisk Lake, where the elevation falls to about 565 feet.

"The most noticeable range of hills is that which crosses the Saskatchewan River at the Pas. This ridge is mainly of glacial origin and is from 20 up to 90 feet high, but situated as it is in a flat country, it forms a very prominent feature. The escarpment formed by the outcrop of the Palaeozoic limestones along the southern edge of the valley of the upper part of the

Grass River, is another prominent feature. This is in the form of a nearly continuous cliff 50 or 60 feet high facing generally to the north. An eastern face of this escarpment may be seen on Lake Winnipeg, from which it probably continues north." [1]

" The ridge crossing the valley at the Pas, at one time held back a large lake, and in this was accumulated a thick deposit of sediment, but as the outlet across the ridge was worn down, the lake disappeared. The river channel across this basin is built apparently above the flood plain. The land on either side is raised but little above the bed of the river channel, and so is subject to periodic inundations. In the country which formed the shore of this lake, it is generally found that limestone beds are not far below the surface, being covered by a light deposit of boulder clay and the lacustrine silt which supports a growth of spruce and poplar.

" In its upper part the stream (the Saskatchewan) is still actively cutting in its channel, and its waters are at all times charged with the denuded material. In the lower part of the delta the process is reversed and the stream becomes the active agent in filling up what seems to have been a chain of lakes. The uppermost one was probably partly filled while the higher levels of Lake Agassiz still covered this basin. On its recession to an elevation of about 900 feet in this vicinity, it is probable that there still remained a lake whose eastern margin reached to the ridge at the Pas. On the further recession of this former lake, the outlet at the Pas was slowly worn down through the boulder clay and parts of the original lake were drained. The eastern end near the outlet seems not to have been so deeply filled by river detritus. Through the plain thus formed, now winds not only the channel of the main stream, but also several other small ones. The course followed by the river of late years is by a channel that has been built up so high above the surrounding plain that at several points

[1] *Reports on the North-Eastern portion of the District of Saskatchewan and Adjacent Parts of the Districts of Athabasca and Keewatin*, by J. Burr Tyrrell, M.A., B.Sc., and D. B. Dowling, B.A., Sc., 1902, Nos. 786, 787, p. 7 ff.

other channels have broken out and connected with streams both to the north and south. Latterly, however, one has been opened to the upper part of Cumberland Lake, and now most of the water of the river passes through it, and in this way the lake acts as a new settling basin which will rapidly silt up."[1]

Limestone and lakes are two other features of the district: in some places the former is buried beneath a thickness of from 10 to 100 feet of soft grey stratified clay, which has been deposited on the rocky floor of the hills and the valleys alike. The lakes, from the shores of which the clay has been sometimes washed, are connected by rivers flowing between low banks of clay, except for the spots where they pitch down rapids and cataracts over Archaean rocks. Occasionally the streams have cut narrow valleys from 10 to 80 feet in depth.

The surface is generally forested, though most of the valuable timber has been destroyed by fire: white spruce, black spruce, Banksian pine, birch, aspen, poplar, cottonwood, and tamarack are the most common varieties among the larger trees, while the rowan tree, the wild cherry, and many of the smaller fruits such as raspberries, gooseberries, red and black currants, strawberries, blueberries, and headberries grow beside most of the lakes and rivers.

Much of the land is well adapted for agriculture. For many years past grains and vegetables of the harder varieties have been grown at the different trading posts and Indian missions. At Foot Print Lake on the Burntwood River by 55° 48′ 26″ N., a few years ago, " both the trader and the missionary had excellent gardens in which they were successfully growing potatoes, cabbages, cauliflowers, onions, radishes, lettuce, peas, beans, turnips, carrots, and other vegetables, and many of the Indians had patches of potatoes sufficiently large to assist materially in the support of their families throughout the winter."[2] Wheat ripens well at Norway House and Cross Lake on the Nelson River.

[1] *Reports on the North-Eastern portion of the District of Saskatchewan and Adjacent Parts of the Districts of Athabasca and Keewatin*, by J. Burr Tyrrell, M.A., B.Sc., and D. B. Dowling, B.A., Sc., 1902, Nos. 786, 787, p. 8 ff.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 7 f.

" Proper drainage is however needed to bring much of the surface into a condition fit for agriculture. Along the river banks this is evident, for while the strip bordering the streams produces a great variety of grasses, shrubs, and trees, a short distance back this is replaced by a swamp covered by moss and stunted spruce. This is more noticeable in the western part of the Nelson valley, where the country is thickly covered by a coating of clay, and the surface is so uniformly level that its gradual slope to the east is not sufficient to drain it. The areas to which it would be possible to introduce a system of drainage would at first be restricted to a narrow margin along the streams." [1]

" From Nelson River westward to longitude 100° 30′, and from the north end of Lake Winnipeg northward to beyond latitude 56°, the country is generally covered with a coating of stratified clay, varying in thickness from a few feet up to 50, 60, or even 100 feet. This clay is of much the same character as that of the Red River Valley, having been, like it, deposited in the bed of the old post-glacial lake that once occupied the basin of Lake Winnipeg. The rivers have, as a rule, cut down through this clay to the underlying rock, but away from the water-stretches, rock-exposures are not of very frequent occurrence. The soil is rich and fertile, and since summer frosts do not seem to be very prevalent, the country will doubtless produce in abundance all the hardier roots and cereals grown in the province of Manitoba, and cattle, sheep, and horses could be successfully raised. If the country were made accessible by a railway passing through it to Hudson Bay, it would certainly support a considerable agricultural population." [2]

The following are the formations met with in the area under consideration: Recent, Pleistocene and its many subdivisions, Silurian, Cambrio-Silurian, Huronian, and Laurentian.

The only recent deposit worth mention is the peat which is

[1] *Reports on the North-Eastern portion of the District of Saskatchewan and Adjacent Parts of the Districts of Athabasca and Keewatin*, by J. Burr Tyrrell, M.A., B.Sc., and D. B. Dowling, B.A., Sc., 1902, Nos. 786, 787, p. 14 ff.

[2] *Summary Report of the Geological Survey*, 1896, No. 614, p. 34 A.

encountered northward from the shore of Lake Winnipeg, and in smaller quantities around some of the lakes on Burntwood River. Recent deposits in the valleys are of small amount, with the exception of the delta of the Saskatchewan River above Cedar Lake, part of which may have been formed before the recession of the glacial Lake Agassiz, although it is evident that there is an enormous amount of sediment still being brought down by this stream. The shore lines of the lakes are usually strongly marked, whether the beaches are rocky, sandy, or packed with heavy boulders. Bottom land is somewhat lacking in the valleys.

The coating of clay which covers the district varies in composition from a soft impervious blue clay to a light grey fine, porous, clayey silt, everywhere evenly stratified, with boulders occasionally protruding in the lower layers, where they have been deposited by the retiring Keewatin glacier. The thickness of the bed decreases westward.

Undisturbed horizontal limestone of about the age of the Niagara formation of New York and Eastern Canada may be seen at several low outcrops on the south shore of Pine Island Lake at Cumberland House.

Undisturbed flat-lying limestone underlies the region south of Grass River, terminating in the north in a steep escarpment from 50 to 100 feet high, which runs north-westward from the north end of Lake Winnipeg to the south end of Wekusko Lake, whence it turns straight westward along the south side of Reed Lake, thence to take a southerly direction rounding up Goose and Athapapuskow Lakes. This limestone is, generally speaking, thick bedded and of a yellowish-grey colour, which in some places changes to a blotchy red. In the underlying sandstone a few fossils of inferior quality are found.

Two bands of micaceous schist, in more or less vertical attitude, apparently squeezed between the Laurentian gneiss on each side, join towards the north-west end of Cross Lake: veins of white quartz, mispickel and pegmatitic granite cut them here and there, as also dykes of dark-grey gabbro, and quantities of iron-and-copper pyrites.

A thinly foliated staurolite schist strikes down the northern arm of Wekusko Lake, and for a short distance down the Cross River below it, changing gradually into a fine-grained green chloritic schist. Reddish gneiss and light grey massive granite are found on the east side of Wekusko Lake, and massive gabbro and red granite on the west and north sides, changing to green schistose conglomerate along the river. A number of other formations of rock occur until Athapapuskow Lake is reached.

Granites and granitoid gneisses of Laurentian type underlie the greater portion of the country. As a rule they seem to have the same general strike as the adjoining Huronian rocks just mentioned, giving the two formations the appearance of having been disturbed, altered and reduced to their present condition at the same time.

The Nelson River, in its northerly course of 230 miles, from Lake Winnipeg to Split Lake, flows in one or more rather shallow and often ill-defined channels for the most part through a country underlaid by Laurentian granite and gneiss. At Pipestone and Cross Lakes it passes over an area of hornblende and mica-schists and highly altered conglomerates, through shores of clay and peat, granite, foliated gneiss, and, in places, sand and pebbles, massive diorite and scattered boulders. It then branches out in several streams, crosses Playgreen Lake through rocky banks, marshy bays and long sandy beaches in front of thick woods; in the northern part there are many boulders.

Below Sea River Falls, ridges of sand and gravel, capped with Banksian pines, may be seen as far as Etoimami River, below which to Pipestone Lake the banks are of gneiss covered with clay, and cut at the lowest portage by a dyke of fine-grained dark green diabase, augite, arnothosite and granite, altering to hornblende and gabbro in the islands, without boulders, while on the beach are lying some large masses of light green sericitic schist, the pipestone of the Indians.

From Cross Lake north-easterly, the Nelson River with its many falls and branches flows between alternate banks of rock and clay or sand, gravel and till, here low and swampy,

On the Nelson River, 14 Miles from Port Nelson

Photo by Dr. W. Sinclair, 1914.

there high and rocky, everywhere covered with a growth of poplars, alders and other trees, as well as grass, vetches, small plants and berry bushes. Here and there clay plains open out, chiefly along the Burntwood River, one of the Nelson's most important tributaries, along the banks of which a fertile clay-covered country extends towards the north as far as Indian Lake on the Churchill River and towards the north-east along the Nelson River to its mouth.

To follow the whole of the 425 miles of the Nelson River to its mouth and enumerate the various rocks and other formations through or over which it winds or precipitates itself is a task which is not within the scope of this book. The few geological terms that have been given in the foregoing pages will, no doubt, suffice to give the reader an idea of the general conformation of the district, the greater portion of which lies within the limits of this great river's basin.[1]

Unfortunately, however, it remains to be added that this mighty river is only navigable from Cross Lake to Manitou Rapids, a distance of about 60 miles, although some writers would have us believe that it is navigable for nearly 100 miles from Lake Winnipeg at its southern end, and for 130 miles from Port Nelson at its mouth. For 90 miles before reaching tide water it is a continuous rapid on which nothing but a canoe can travel. The cascades, rapids and falls of the Nelson River afford a total possible water power of 5,906,000 horse-power, which, unfortunately again, it will be almost impossible ever to develop.

[1] Briefly it may be stated that from Split Lake towards the bay is Silurian formation; from there to the Pas is gneiss granite formation.

CHAPTER XIV

NATURAL RESOURCES

For a good many people the Hudson Bay route resolves itself to the possibility of the water portion through the strait: the question, however, does not all lie in this feature of the problem.

It has been shown that the bay proper never freezes over: we have also seen in the report of ex-Chief Engineer Armstrong that at Port Nelson it often happens that near the point where it is intended to build the wharves the water does not freeze, and when it does the ice is not more than 10 inches thick.

On the east side of James Bay flows a considerable river with a good port at its mouth: we refer to the Nottaway River and Port Nottaway. It has been figured that if a railway were to be built connecting Port Nottaway with Quebec or Montreal, the distance between the western wheat-fields and Quebec or Montreal would be shorter by about 150 miles. Even admitting that the distance would be the same as via the Great Lakes, here is an alternative route of immense importance when it is known that records kept at Port Nottaway for over a quarter of a century show that at this point the depth of ice is never more than three feet. The present distance by railway between Saskatoon and Montreal is 1885 miles. It is stated by some persons that by Nottaway the distance would be 1900 miles, or just 15 miles more; 700 miles of this route would be by water. The cost of freight by the present route is $8.17 per ton; by the proposed route it would be $5.58, a saving of almost 25 per cent. These figures are based on February 1912 prices.

At Vladivostock, in Northern Siberia, ice-breakers are at work throughout the winter, keeping open a channel several fathoms wide for a distance of scores of miles: nothing of the sort would be required at Port Nelson and Port Nottaway:

this route would therefore have the advantage, the immense advantage, over the lake route, of being open the year round. This the people of Quebec fully realise, hence the formation of the North Bay Railway Company at Montreal with a capital of $10,000,000 for the construction of a railroad from Nottaway to Quebec, with a branch line to Montreal. According to press reports, the Federal Government would give a subsidy of $3,200,000, while the province of Quebec would offer a grant of 8000 acres per mile for the section north of the Transcontinental, and 5000 acres per mile for the section to the south. The line would run north-westerly from Montreal to Nottaway, crossing the Transcontinental near Bell River. The cost is estimated at from $40,000 to $50,000 per mile, the heaviest expenditure being on that section passing through the Laurentides.

It is the opinion of the men at the head of this project that it will form the cheapest possible grain route from the west, barring always the feasibility of the strait route. Consignments of wheat from the prairie provinces will pass over the Hudson Bay Railway to be unloaded at Port Nelson, whence large steamers will carry it to the south-east shore of James Bay, and up the Nottaway River to the point of transhipment, to be transported over the rail route to Quebec or Montreal.

The province of Ontario is also making a bold bid for the honour of first reaching the bay with a railway. While Quebec had men out selecting the site of Nottaway, the Ontario Government was getting busy and selecting a harbour and terminus at Moose Factory for an extension of its Temiskaming and Northern Ontario line from Cochrane. So that when the main Hudson Bay Railway reaches Canada's great inland sea, the eastern provinces bordering on the latter's shores will be found in readiness to take full advantage of the new route of communication and, if possible, to divert as much of the traffic offering over it as possible.

On the other hand, the recent formation of such companies as the Hudson Bay, Peace River and Pacific Railway and the Alberta, Peace River and Eastern Railway, with terminals on both the Pacific Coast and the bay, indicates that the west is

fully familiar with the possibilities of the new route of commerce which will follow the opening of the Hudson Bay route.

But the carrying of the grain of the western wheat fields cannot be the only reason for the spending of the millions of dollars which the Hudson Bay Railway will cost: the natural resources, in the country that it or its adjuncts or complements will traverse, alone would justify the expense. Volumes could be written on the subject. The object of this book being to furnish information about the project of the Hudson Bay route in general, including the district which it is being built through, we shall now enumerate rapidly the main natural resources, as they are known from the very meagre exploration which has been made so far.[1]

Whatever the original purpose for the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company may have been, from the moment that the men who were employed by the gentlemen adventurers began to explore the shores of Hudson Bay and obtain an authentic idea of the resources of the country, the fur trade struck them as offering unparalleled chances for exceptional returns, and quite naturally the efforts of the members of the company were bent on the development of this one resource; quite naturally, also, they discouraged[2]—until recently when conditions made it necessary for them, if not to prove experiments along other lines, at least to permit them to be tried—the establishment of grain-growing or

[1] "After a few more years' inflow of immigration at the present rate, Canada's future expansion as an agricultural, lumbering, mining, and industrial country will depend upon the exploitation of the natural resources of the Dominion's vast, unexplored northland."—Opening words of introduction to the *New North-West, Senate Report*, 1907.

[2] See footnote 1 of Chapter II. and the testimonies of travellers in Chapter XX. The following taken from *The Life and Times of Lord Strathcona*, by W. T. R. Preston, page 298, is just to the point: "Had there been no Hudson's Bay Company or had the Company not deliberately prevented the expansion of Western Canada for so many decades after it should have been open to the world, the population of Canada would now be nearer to twenty than seven millions. If the Stuart dynasty blighted English history, it also cast its evil spell over Canada at the time the Hudson's Bay Company was chartered. For the sake of the private interests of a few friends of the monarch who wanted to traffic with a public franchise, an incalculable loss of millions of a sturdy race of people was inflicted on the Empire."

cattle-raising farms, or any other industry which, by bringing population to the country, would forcibly limit the territory of the fur-bearing animals by driving them into the icy deserts of the north. While the fur trade is not so important to-day in Manitoba's new territory as it was in the days of Radisson and Groseillers and the men of the Hudson's Bay Company who followed them, nor even as good as when the Scotch merchants of Montreal first made their appearance in Rupert's Land, the amount of money which is paid yearly to the Indian and white trappers for all kinds of furs is enormous, representing at the Pas alone a sum of $500,000. Of course, with the advent of railway communication, quite a number of the northern ports are served from the Pas, and they in return have their packs of furs transferred there. But there are other important points, such as Grand Rapids and Norway House in the interior, Fort Churchill and York Factory on the bay, which manage their affairs independently of the Pas, and are also similar centres—probably, in fact, more important points. The chief fur found is that of the muskrat, also called muskwash. At the Pas it is figured that over one-half of the trade is represented by this fur. It suffices to have a look at the various fur warehouses of the town to be convinced of this fact. At certain epochs, rooms are filled with the small skins to the ceiling, while only a few others, beavers, fishers, sables, minks, musk oxen, wolves, foxes, etc., are to be seen. Of course these are more valuable than the muskrat and it takes considerably fewer to make up the same amount of money.

It is in the early summer and the late fall of the year, after the ice has cleared or formed on the lakes and rivers, that the trappers, native or white, come in with their packs of valuable crop, in canoes or in carioles according to the season. They are often met at the landing or in the street by the greedy buyers. The white trappers sell as and to whom they please. The Indians receive the protection of the Federal authorities; the packs are deposited with the agent, who receives bids and sells to the highest bidder, when the Indian has not contracted a debt in one of the stores for traps

or supplies for which he has agreed to fetch a certain number of furs. With cash in towns like the Pas, or goods reasonably valued in the remote posts given in exchange for the furs that the trapper has caught for the market, we are far from the days when the poor Indian had to pile up beaver skins tightly around an old gun to become the owner of that gun, which shows also that the Indian has become educated to the relative value of things and the importance of competition in trade.

As early as the beginning of the second half of the 18th century, one of the early writers on the Hudson Bay district, Robson, could see a wonderful future ahead of the country in the fishery line. In our days, that American writer on the north, Curwood, simply falls into ecstasy before the immense possibilities of this industry in New Manitoba. Both justly wonder why better efforts are not made to develop this most interesting and well-paying natural resource. The fact is that the innumerable lakes which, with the many rivers, form the main features of the country, are teeming with fish. True, a few firms have turned their attention that way, and each winter men are employed by them on the lakes in the vicinity of the Pas, whence car-loads are shipped to the American cities. But in comparison to the extent of the possibilities afforded, what little development has taken place so far would hardly be worth mentioning if it were not to show what can be done. No doubt, however, that with the opening of the Hudson Bay Railway, chances for the growth of this most important industry will increase, and it may be expected that before many months this business will be one that will employ a good many men, not only during the winter season, but also in summer, for of what advantage to the prairie districts will the facility of procuring fresh fish within the limits of their own territory not be? The time is not far distant when the dealers of Western Canada will abandon the habit of depending on fish from the Great Lakes or British Columbia to supply their customers. There are tons of this natural food going to waste every year in the northern lakes, only awaiting trans-

A View of Finger's Saw Mill at the Pas

portation to the homes of the western farmers within 300 or 400 miles distance. Almost every kind of fish which may be thought of is found in these northern waters, and large samples weighing a goodly number of pounds are of common occurrence.

But the lakes and rivers of New Manitoba are not the only places where an important fish industry can be developed. There is also, and above all, the bay itself, where it is thought a salmon industry will receive sufficient impetus, as soon as the road is open for traffic, to rival that of British Columbia. No doubt, further, whale-fishing and the marketing of this mammal's product will help considerably to furnish freight to the trains of the Hudson Bay Railway bound for the interior. From a table prepared by Dr. Boas, it appears that for twenty-nine years the United States has sent 113 vessels to Hudson Bay whale-fishing, and that they have obtained 1620 barrels of sperm, 56,900 barrels of whale oil, and nearly a million pounds of whalebone, which, considering that the average size of these ships was only 240 tons, makes it clear that there must have been a very handsome margin of profit. The white whale, which, in consequence of the high price of whalebone, namely $12,000 a ton, is by far the richest prize a whaler can capture, attains a size of from fifty to sixty feet. It is, of course, getting scarce, but the white whale still abounds, going up the rivers with every tide. So tame is it that it approaches within twenty feet of the boats. These whales will each average about forty gallons of oil, and the skin is valuable, bringing from $20 to $30 apiece. The marshal (or unicorn) and the walrus also exist in considerable numbers, and well repay the trouble of hunting them; while the seal swarms upon the ice. It does not seem unreasonable to expect that the completion of the Hudson Bay Railway will mean interesting developments for the fisheries of Hudson Bay by giving them rapid communication with the markets of the interior for the disposal of their products.

Very little prospecting has so far been done with a view to discover what mineral resources are to be found in the country

which will be traversed by the Hudson Bay Railway. Yet it is already known that the following minerals exist: Ironstone, nickel, manganiferous iron ore, gold, silver, molybdenum, copper, lignite, gypsum, petroleum-bearing limestone, anthracite, various kinds of ornamental stone, mica, clays, plumbago, carbonate of iron, amber. It is, of course, hard to say in what quantity each of these minerals exists; in some instances the signs are very encouraging, while in others only traces have so far been noticed. The best and most authentic results seem so far to have been obtained by the Wright-Bancroft party, which has been busy for the past year[1] in the district about Thicket Portage, 150 miles north of the Pas along the Hudson Bay road. Fitted up at considerable expense by some of the directors of the Canadian City and Town Properties, Limited, and this company's western manager, Mr. Edward Baillie, as a private undertaking, this party spent several months last winter and this spring studying conditions on the spot. It returned to town in the first part of April, and has since returned to its field of labour. According to the gentlemen composing this party, the chiefs of which have spent the greater portion of their lives in this work, and can, therefore, be relied upon for any information which they choose to give out, samples which have been assayed have shown $11 worth per ton of copper and gold in most of the groups of claims located by them; in one case nickel proving out $10 to the ton has been found, while it is, they say, of common occurrence to find gold turning out $5 to $6 to the ton. In one instance a sample found at a depth of five feet only, which was assayed by E. W. Widdowson, provincial assayer of British Columbia, proved out at $17.47 for copper and $1.66 for gold and silver, making a total of $19.13 value per ton. In no place where any digging has been done so far has any wall been found. The greatest difficulty which will be encountered where actual exploiting is attempted will be the keeping out of water. If means can be devised to conquer this trouble without excessive expense, from the present indications, none of which

[1] 1912.

are the result of deep digging, it may be reasonably surmised that developments of the mineral resources of the north will prove out very valuable.

The most common mineral of all, however, and one which has attracted very little attention, although it is the handiest of access and the easiest to develop, with an assured market, is the limestone rock. This rock is found in small quantities at the Pas. When one gets up along the railway, extensive beds spreading sometimes for a considerable distance under the ground are met with until one reaches Cormorant Lake, the Narrows and Moose Lake, where untold quantities are to be found. The contractors have used and are still using an immense quantity of this rock in building the very roadbed of the Hudson Bay Railway, and it is hardly possible to tell where they have taken it. Being situated right along the line of a railway, and along the shores of lakes and rivers accessible to boats, there seems to be no reason why this important natural resource should not be developed in the near future, as the demand for this kind of building material can only be on the increase, and a market exists for it at the present time, not only at the Pas, where more substantial buildings are on the eve of being erected, but also in the territory in Northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan accessible from that town. Indeed, the limestone to be found along the Hudson Bay Railway in the vicinity of the Pas is destined in the near future, as Chief Engineer Armstrong predicted in 1909, to become the future source of supply for the greater part of these two provinces.[1]

[1] Since this was written, important gold finds have been made at Beaver Lake, north of Cumberland House, and within a reasonable distance from the Pas, whence most of the expeditions have started. Everything indicates that gold exists in paying quantities, and an important settlement has now been established. The Beaver Lake Gold Mining Company, the main company making operations, has now important machinery on the ground. Samples extracted from veins in that company's holdings assayed by Milton, Hersey & Company, Limited, of Montreal, have shown gold values ranging from $10 to $226.80 per ton: one sample has given $560 and another $1600 to the ton. Other samples treated by Crittenden & Cullity, mining engineers, at the company's office at Beaver Lake, have shown values ranging from $4.20 to $16.00 per ton, while two samples have

It is well known that between the Pas and Split Lake there exists an area of about 10,000 square miles which is characterised by a heavy clay soil entirely free from boulders.[1] Rock flour deposited by glacial streams in the quiet waters of a great lake has formed lacustrine clays, of which both the soil and the subsoil are composed, so merged together that it is excessively difficult to tell where the difference begins; in places, immediately the leaves, moss and other packed vegetation are removed, pure clay appears. Generally, however, about six inches of loam have already formed on the clay, from the slow decomposition of the numerous vegetable matters which have lain there for centuries, slowly turning into a rich soil; while on the ridge tops, where the moss and other plants do not abound, the brown clay is almost on the surface. The 10,000 square miles which extend from the valley of the Nelson River westward to near Burntwood and Wekusko Lakes form a gently rolling plateau, rising in places as high as 50 feet above the neighbouring rivers. Fair, natural drainage is available. In getting away from the valleys of the larger streams, however, the land is so low that it would be necessary to employ artificial means to get rid of the surface water which renders the land unsuitable at present for agricultural purposes.

gone as high as $208 and $492 per ton respectively.[2] On the other hand, early in 1915, important gold finds have been made at a point known as Herb Lake, a short distance from the Hudson Bay Railway north-east of the Pas, in the district visited in 1913 by the Bancroft-Wright party. While no reliable figures have yet been published, values are said to range so far from a trace of gold to $39.08 per ton.[3] One of the original locators is reported to have sold his claim for $3000. Acknowledging the importance of the mineral developments at Beaver Lake and Herb Lake, the Government of Manitoba has placed $500 and $1000 respectively in the hands of the officers of the Pas Board of Trade for the building of roads to help miners and prospectors to reach their destinations, from the various lakes over a portage in the case of Beaver Lake, and from the railway in the case of Herb Lake.

[1] A portion of this district is now opened to homesteaders.

[2] From prospectus of the Beaver Lake Gold Mining Company, Limited, p. 18 *et seq.*

[3] From the *Pas Herald and Mining News*, Vol. IV., No. 16, March 26, 1915.

Apart from this large tract of land which the spending of a few hundred thousand dollars would render available for settlement, one must not forget that along the Saskatchewan River and the different streams which flow into it between Cumberland House and the Pas, and east of this town as far as Grand Rapids, there is a considerable tract of land which is sure to become, within the next quarter of a century, one of the best farming districts of Western Canada. All that is required is that the project of lowering the level of the river by dredging it and cutting through the head of the Grand Rapids at Lake Winnipeg be given the necessary impetus to bring it to an accomplished fact. Nature, which, if given time, does not fail to attain any aim which may be set for it, is doing its best to that end, and year after year carries in the course of its main river a large quantity of sediment which it deposits here and there, slowly elevating the numerous marshes over which it spreads its muddy waters: for they are nothing but marshes with an excess of water, all those so-called shallow lakes which border the Saskatchewan River and its tributaries from Grand Rapids westward almost to Fort à la Corne, this side of the point where the two Saskatchewans meet below Prince Albert. One may imagine what a rich soil would be conquered on the floods of this mighty river, if its course could be in some manner regulated and kept within safe bounds, since this soil would be entirely alluvial, and therefore of the best quality which may possibly be desired. The Federal Government has now an engineering party working up from Grand Rapids, and it is understood that part of the men's work will consist in figuring out the feasibility of a scheme whereby the level of the river may be lowered, and the immense marshes, low lands and shallow lakes, which would then be from 10 to 12 feet above high-water mark, may become a rich agricultural country, where furrows fifty miles long could be ploughed without a stone or any other impediment in the way.

The question arises here: granting that this work be done and this land be reclaimed, would not the northern climate be a natural bar to the growing of ordinary cereals and

principally wheat? In this respect, it is well to remember that daylight is the main requisite for the fast ripening of grain. Vegetation matures wonderfully in northern latitudes, owing to the very long days during the growth season. According to Chief Engineer Armstrong of the Hudson Bay Railway, a study of records of the Meteorological Office indicates that there is no reason why farming operations would suffer more in the district between the Pas and the Hudson Bay than they do at Prince Albert.

The fact that most of the land between the different rivers which empty into Hudson Bay, by means of the Churchill and the Nelson Rivers, has remained more or less unexplored all these years is no doubt the main basis for the assertion often made that this northern country is too cold for the growing of grain. But when one knows that at several of the Hudson's Bay Company's posts as far north as 56° wheat has been successfully grown, that at Lac la Ronge by 55° it nas been harvested for seven years in succession without frost, that at Cross Lake by 55½° it ripens well, that at Norway House by 54°, Stanley House 55½°, Nelson House 54°, it has been cultivated with equal success, one wonders why this false opinion about the north should exist. The amazement increases when one reads that Hudson Bay was the first part of Western Canada to become known, and that many of the experiments just mentioned were made at York Factory before there had been any attempt at growing any sort of cereals or vegetables in the Red River valley and on the western plains, indeed even before these were known to exist. A few years before Captain de la Corne made his first experiment at farming in the Carrot River valley,[1] in 1754, was not Robson writing: "The climate of Hudson's Bay is very habitable: the soil is rich and fruitful, fit for growing corn"?

Even if it had not been proved beyond doubt, by the trials made during the last century and a half at the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, that wheat may be successfully grown, is it not generally admitted that the possibilities of

[1] A number of farmers and families are now settling in this district as squatters, the lands having not yet been surveyed.

acclimatisation and selection are countless, and that tropical plants are daily working their way northward by a natural and gradual process of adaptation, *a fortiori* more hardy cereals?

The next farming country to which the farmers coming from all parts of the world will migrate will be Manitoba's new territory; the sturdy men who will not fear a little hard work at the start will in time become the most prosperous farmers of Western Canada, for they will be settled the closest to the markets of the world, within a few hours' run from an ocean port.

Millions of dollars will no doubt be required to bring about these conditions, but it will be money well spent and which will soon be repaid a hundredfold and more. Indeed, Manitoba as a farming province is far from having used up its territory.[1]

Next to the furs, the forests are at present an important source of revenue in New Manitoba, although they are far from having received the attention and the consequent development that they well deserve. The timber is of two kinds, that which is large enough to be sawed into lumber or turned into ties, and that which is of the size which is used for making pulp.[2] The Finger Lumber Company, Ltd., have erected a monstrous mill at the Pas where they manufacture all kinds of lumber, employing the best machinery procurable, which does away with the necessity of employing as large a number of men as is generally found in mills of its size; it is recognised to be one of the largest, most up-to-date saw-mills on the continent. It is equipped with gang-saw machinery, gang-sawed lumber being admitted as the best that can be manufactured. The capacity of the mill is 125,000 feet per ten-hour day. The drying yards occupy

[1] The whole of Chapter XVIII. has been devoted to the study of the climate of the Hudson Bay Territory.

[2] It has been estimated that there are 5,756,660 cords of pulpwood in the sole region between the Pas and Split Lake, extending 10 miles in width on either side of the Hudson Bay Railway. At $6.50 per cord, which is 3 cents less than the average price of pulpwood in Canada in 1913, this represents a value of $37,318,290.00.

480 acres of land. The statement has been made by their President that once their intention of duplicating the present capacity of their mill has been carried into effect, the limits that they have secured on the Carrot River, on the Saskatchewan River, and on the adjoining lakes, will contain enough timber to last them fifty years. Spruce is the most common, not to say the only timber available: it is not of a very large sample, but the supply is quite abundant in places.

It is now admitted that along the Hudson Bay Railway forests exist where lumber of a marketable quality will be found in sufficient quantity to guarantee the erection of several mills on the different rivers and on the numerous lakes of this northern country. The Hudson Bay Construction Company have a tie mill near Westray on the Pas River south-west of the Pas, and have several tie camps along the Carrot and the Saskatchewan Rivers, as well as on Clearwater Lake and other lakes up the line: they will be able to procure all the ties that they will require for the construction of the road along the line at a short distance on both sides of the right of way. The timber not being of a large size would naturally make splendid material for the pulpwood industry,[1] which, so far, has received no one's attention, no doubt on account of the facility there is of procuring all this material in Northern Quebec and Northern Ontario in proximity to railroads. But once the Hudson Bay Railway gives the necessary connection, this industry in New Manitoba is sure to attract attention. It has been figured that the press of Western Canada alone could make use of all the products that would be turned out of the mills for some time, and that the manufacture of paper, so to speak, on the ground, should mean a great saving to these newspapers.

Most of the parties who have travelled in this northern country, either as prospectors or employed in connection with the location of the Hudson Bay Railway, all by different routes, agree on having come across areas of timber of commercial value around the lakes and streams that they found on their way, varying in size from a few acres to some as large

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 51.

as fifty square miles, aggregating several thousand square miles. It must be noted, however, that for these areas which have been seen by these prospectors and surveyors, always more or less in the vicinity of the line being traced for the railway, immense areas on both sides no doubt exist that no one has ever seen and which may well be expected to contain timber of as good value. Whatever meagre information which may have been obtained fully guarantees the recommendation of a thorough examination of this most important resource in Manitoba's new territory.

There is possibly no natural resource in Canada about which so inaccurate data are published as its water powers. People are in the habit of talking about these, without ever giving themselves the trouble of fully studying out whether these data are based upon carefully ascertained facts obtained in the field or not, with the result that they are easily misled about the actual facts. It is very important to remember that to arrive at the proper value of a water power, other interests, such as municipal and domestic water supply, navigation, agriculture and irrigation, are just as much dependent upon precipitation, which is the primary source of water powers, as the water powers themselves. Fair allowance for the demands of the other interests that have just claims upon water as a natural source must, therefore, be made, from which it will be unreasonable to judge of the exact value of a water power without first discounting considerably from what it may appear to be worth at first sight. There are rules for the calculation of this natural physical allowance that necessarily reduce considerably the figures which may be procured from actual examination. All these facts have, of course, been taken into consideration by the Commission of Conservation of Canada, from whose report most of this information is borrowed, in the publication of the data that it has procured on the subject, the result of nearly two years' work of investigation and compilation.

With this little preface well understood, it will be interesting to know that New Manitoba contains one-third of the whole available water power in the Dominion. Not stopping to

mention numerous falls and rapids in the rivers which are known to exist, but about which no reliable data have yet been gathered, in fact limiting information to the Nelson River, one who has not given the matter much attention is surprised to find that almost 7,000,000 horse-power has been estimated as being capable of development on this wonderful river alone, which has a draining area of 430,000 square miles. The following are the best known of the rapids on the Nelson:

	Horse-power
Limestone	1,140,000
Long Spruce	1,140,000
Kettle	1,290,000
Gull	900,000
Birthday	320,000
Grand	270,000
Sepewesk Lake	416,000
Bladder	147,000
Whitemud	403,000
Ebb and Flow	148,000
Cross Lake	605,000

Nearer to the older portion of the province, on the Saskatchewan River, are to be found the well-known Grand Rapids, situated near the mouth of the Saskatchewan River on Lake Winnipeg. Opinions as to the importance of these rapids vary considerably, some placing them as high as 350,000 horse-power; the figures supplied by the Commission of Conservation are 80,000. The stretch of the river from Cedar Lake is seven miles, and the rapids extend over the last two miles. Over these rapids there flow the accumulated waters of the two Saskatchewan Rivers and all the other rivers to a point forty miles west of Banff. It is estimated by the most sanguine that Grand Rapids can be made to develop power enough to operate all the industries of the three provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

As to the millions of horse-power on the Nelson River, it is possible that in future years, after the Hudson Bay Railway is well in operation, the motive power will be changed from steam to electricity. The eventual feasibility of this was greatly impressed upon the Hon. Frank Cochrane

during his trip over the line last summer.[1] The power plant would probably be located at Whitemud Falls, about half-way between Lake Winnipeg and Hudson Bay. By operating the line with electricity, it is estimated that not only would the cost be less, but that the difficulties experienced in keeping up steam during cold weather would also be obviated.

As Dr. Orok, M.P.P. for the Pas, put it in his maiden speech in the Local House last winter, there is enough water power in New Manitoba not only to turn every wheel in the country, from the farmer's grindstone to the city's street railway, but also to light every home, every place of business, every village, town and city. Unfortunately, according to trustworthy travellers and engineers, very few, if any, of the Nelson rapids or falls are susceptible of development, except at immense cost: the best and easiest water powers in that region, those of the Grass River, strangely enough, do not appear in any of the government reports.

The only railway which, up to the present, has been enterprising and foreseeing enough to tap the north country besides the Hudson Bay Railway, now under construction, is the Canadian Northern Railway, which has a line running from Hudson Bay Junction on the Winnipeg-Prince Albert line to the Pas, about 90 miles north-east. The Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk Pacific Railways have both expressed their intention of also connecting with the Hudson Bay Railway, the former by buying out the charter of the Alberta Central, which is to go through Saskatoon and the Pas, where it is to branch out towards Port Nelson and Fort Churchill, the latter by showing on the large maps of North America, which it distributes to its clients, a line from Canora to the Pas and north to Fort Churchill. Besides those of these two companies, a number of charters have been secured, among others the Canadian North-Western, from Lethbridge in the west and Winnipeg in the east, the High River-Saskatchewan-Hudson Bay, the Saskatoon and Hudson Bay, the Brandon Saskatchewan and Hudson Bay, and the Canadian Northern Railway two more lines, one from Melfort and the other from Prince

[1] 1912.

Albert. All these lines, in the intention of the promoters, are to connect with the Hudson Bay road at the Pas; the Canadian Northern Railway, Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, and Canadian Pacific Railway only seem to have shown their intention of continuing further north after reaching that town. Other Canadian Northern Railway lines will also ultimately join the government road by using the piece of line already built by the company from Hudson Bay Junction to the Pas, such as the Craven branch, the Maryfield branch, while the same company's lines from Regina and North Battleford to Prince Albert, and from Saskatoon and Humboldt to Melfort, will also have connections with the Hudson Bay Railroad over the projected Prince Albert-Pas and Melfort-Pas lines. The Saskatchewan Central is the name of a company which has a charter from the International boundary near North Portal to Yorkton: no doubt, when it begins building operations it will find it necessary to continue further north and also connect with the Hudson Bay Railway.

So far the different companies which already operate lines in the rest of the country have been waiting to see what practical results will be attained by the building of the Hudson Bay Railway before connecting their system with the new road, and the main point they have taken into consideration has been the practicability of navigation on the bay and through the strait. As the building of the railway progresses, however, these companies will find that, from the point of view of local business alone, they will be warranted in entering Manitoba's new territory, as it is getting more evident every day that the natural resources are quite plentiful enough to necessitate railway communications almost immediately. Already statistics are being prepared by the Board of Trade of the North Country's chief centre, the Pas, with a view to draw the attention of the Canadian Pacific Railway and Grand Trunk Pacific Railway authorities to the necessity of making arrangements to get their share of the trade which is sure to almost immediately arise from the exploitation of local natural resources. In the case of the Grand Trunk Pacific, only a short line would be required to be built, as this company is now at

Lynx Falls on the Grass River

Photo by Dr. W. Sinclair, 1914.

work north of Canora towards Hudson Bay Junction, south of the Pas. There seems no reason why these two companies should not desire to get, as soon as possible, a share of the business which is now offering or will soon offer in lumber, minerals, fish, etc., as well as passenger service to and from these new districts, in which much settlement is bound to take place in the very near future.

For the development of the many resources of New Manitoba, it must be remembered that there will always be very important water routes besides the Hudson Bay Railway and the other railways which may decide to build through the district, and these will, no doubt, always be big factors in the transportation, to the different markets which will gradually open up along Canada's new transcontinental, of the products of various kinds which, little by little, will be offered for sale by the settlers of this new district. In fact, these water routes from time immemorial have been the only ways of communication used, first by the Indians in going from place to place, later in trading with the posts of the Hudson's Bay Companies invading their territory, then by the men in the employ of these firms, when it came about that competition forced them to go after the furs instead of waiting for them. At the present time they are still the only routes used by these people or by those who are beginning to go through the country prospecting, locating railways, or even pleasure seeking. In the remote portions of the country, owing to long portages occasioned by falls on rivers, or stretches of land between lakes, the birch-bark or Peterborough canoes have been the only crafts used; but on the Saskatchewan River and on the lakes adjoining and communicating, much heavier boats, moved by steam or gasoline, have for some time been utilised. The main port for these for years, but principally since the advent of the Canadian Northern Railway and Hudson Bay Railway, has been the Pas: there the Ross Navigation Company, who have four steamboats and a proportionate number of barges, have their quarters. They have established a regular service between the Pas and the neighbouring points, going as far west as

Cumberland House and as far east as Grand Rapids. At high water their boats are able to navigate the Pas River. Other points served by them are Red Earth on the Carrot River, and Limestone Portage on Moose Lake, the latter point having been extensively used, during the last two years, in connection with the transportation of men, provisions, and material for the Hudson Bay Railway. The Finger Lumber Company, Ltd., have also two tug boats for the taking down of their rafts of logs from up the Carrot River, while the Hudson Bay Construction Company have one for their ties up the Saskatchewan River. Besides these, there are quite a number of gasoline tug boats and launches of all sizes and descriptions. Although the Pas is the most important river port between Winnipeg and the Rockies, so far nothing practical has been done toward the building of proper boat accommodation, except an appropriation of $30,000 for docks voted upon at the last session of the House of Commons.

As the Hudson Bay Railway extends into the northland and facilitates the transportation of heavy material, it may be expected that important river and lake traffic will be established on several of the streams and lakes, on which the canoe is at present the only sort of craft seen.

Apart from the main natural resources which have just been briefly enumerated and defined, there are a number of other natural features, which though perhaps less important are none the less as attractive to a certain class of people; such are the beauty spots of this immense territory where thousands of streams and lakes, surrounded with evergreen forests, stretch on all sides for miles. It has been truly said that New Manitoba will soon share with New Ontario the advantage of attracting, in the summer time, the lovers of grandiose scenery and the pleasures that nature affords. The hunter, the angler, the canoeist, will find in this northern country innumerable opportunities of enjoying themselves in the practice of their favourite sports. Lakes and rivers, with water as pure and as clear, and with sandy shores as pretty as those of Clearwater Lake, abound: these are replete with fish of all sizes, while the forests, the plains, the marshes,

are full of game of all kinds from duck to pelican, whisky jack to ptarmigan, rabbit to moose, or musk ox if one is prepared to go far enough. The climate in summer is ideal, there being none of those hot nights which further south prevent people from enjoying their rest as they should; this, no doubt, is due to the myriads of rivers and lakes which keep the atmosphere in a relatively constant state of coolness. It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that the climate of New Manitoba attains at any time any disagreeable extremes. In winter, while the thermometer may at times go down a few degrees lower than in the older parts of the province, the lack of wind, due to the surrounding forests, renders the temperature perfectly bearable; many are the houses at the Pas which never use storm doors or windows. In the summer the very hot waves so common to the prairie are unknown; the days are bright and long, there being practically no night at the summer solstice. While the rainfall is sufficiently abundant, hail and thunder storms are not of common occurrence.

After having portrayed as accurately as possible the main features of New Manitoba, it would not do to say that there are none of an unpleasant nature: where is the country which has not its quota of bad points to contrast with its good ones? Whatever these may be in the case of New Manitoba, there can be no doubt that there are enough serious advantages to warrant the statement that the province in the boundary settlement has acquired an immense stretch of territory which, some day in the near future, will prove to be a gold mine for the people of divers aptitudes who will little by little choose it as their future home.[1]

[1] Dr. William Sinclair of the Pas, who made a canoe trip to and from Port Nelson in the late summer and early fall of 1914, on his return gave a short account of his impressions on the subject of this chapter in an interview with the *Telegram* of Winnipeg, which will be found *in extenso* at the end of this book under head of Appendix G. Read also the summary of that part of Major Chambers' book, *The Unexploited West*, dealing with the natural resources of Northern Manitoba, given in Appendix I.

CHAPTER XV

THE SASKATCHEWAN RIVER

At Winnipeg, on July 12, 1910, the Honourable Mr. Pugsley, Minister of Public Works in the Federal Government, who was accompanying Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his western tour, was the first public man to refer to an important though purely western transportation problem intimately connected with the Hudson Bay Railway. He said: "Nature has provided right at your doors a great river running down into Lake Winnipeg, a lake that is greater than Lake Ontario. The River Saskatchewan rises some 1300 miles to the westward, in the foothills of the Rockies. I am one of those who believe that with a reasonable expenditure of money, it will be possible to create a great system of inland navigation extending from the city of Edmonton and beyond, right down for 1300 miles to this great city."[1]

Two days later, at the opening of the St Andrews locks, on the Red River, connecting Winnipeg with the lake, Sir Wilfrid had the following to say on the subject: "We have opened the Red River up to Lake Winnipeg and it now remains for my friend Dr. Pugsley to open the Saskatchewan River from Edmonton to Winnipeg. I am glad to say that my friend, the Minister of Public Works, is already at this work. He has engineers in the field surveying the Saskatchewan River, and before many years are over I hold that we shall witness such a thing as has been witnessed to-day—that is to say, the opening to navigation of the Saskatchewan River up to the city of Winnipeg; and if God spares me, and

[1] Castell Hopkins, *op. cit.* 1910, p. 265.

"I have the greatest possible confidence that in the immediate future a great traffic will be developed on the Saskatchewan River between Edmonton and the Pas, on the line of the Hudson Bay Railway leading to the Nelson River."—Hon. Robert Rogers, Minister of Public Works, at Edmonton, September 1913.

THE PAS IN 1858

From a sketch made by John Fleming, D.L.S., reproduced in North-West Territory Report on the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan exploring expedition, by Henry Youle Hind, M.A.

if the Grace of God and the will of the people keep me where I am, I am sure that I shall see the day when a barge laden with coal at Edmonton, nay, at the very foot of the Rocky Mountains, will be unloaded at Winnipeg without breaking bulk on the way." [1]

These two utterances were no doubt in answer to the resolution passed by the Associated Boards of Trade of Western Canada, a month earlier, " urging the improvement of navigation of the Saskatchewan River."

In 1895 Mr. John Ross, who built the north shore line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, had written: " When the population of these territories comes to be counted by millions and tens of millions, as in course of time it will be, all the railroads likely to be built would not suffice to carry their surplus productions to the ocean, at least at such rates as would be satisfactory to agricultural communities. But through these wide regions Nature has provided a highway for cheap transportation, which can, at an outlay which the government might well bear, be rendered available."

With the advent of the railway, and the settling of the southern portions of the western provinces, what had been the principal highway of the traders and explorers since Lavérendrye's sons had discovered it in 1741, the River Saskatchewan, had been more or less forgotten. Only the Indians with their birch-bark canoes and the Hudson's Bay Company with its York boats, steam vessels, and barges had continued to navigate its waters, from Edmonton on the North Branch and Medicine Hat on the South Branch to Grand Rapids on Lake Winnipeg. As soon as the Hudson Bay Railway became a possibility of the near future, it appeared evident that this immense waterway of the old trading days should again be utilised, this time in transporting the grain of the western plains to the Pas, the south terminus of the new projected railway.

The Peace River country was just commencing to attract the attention of the settler, offering the same advantages for colonisation that Manitoba and the south portions of Sas-

[1] Castell Hopkins, *op. cit.* 1910, p. 266.

katchewan and Alberta had offered since the opening of the country by the Canadian Pacific Railway. On account of the remoteness of the district from the eastern markets and the consequent high cost of transportation, it seemed reasonable to expect that the settler would be encouraged in the task of opening these last immense plains by an effort to give him a means of transportation with the help of which he could compete successfully against the excessive charges which would necessarily be made by the railways entering the new territory.

As early as 1858 the government of Canada, which was already looking with envy at the North-West Territory of those days over which the Hudson's Bay Company held sway, had sent an expedition to, among other objects, survey the River Saskatchewan with a view to study its navigability. Dr. Henry Youle Hind, M.A., professor of chemistry and geology in the University of Trinity College, Toronto, had been placed in charge. His report, published the following year, is one of the most extensive works on the subject, and, to this day, remains an authoritative record. The exploration, however, did not extend to the North Branch of the river, which, from all precedent reports handed down from the days of Henry and Thompson, had proved, beyond doubt, to be the more navigable of the two branches.

Hind thus describes the South Branch and the main river: "The south branch of the Saskatchewan is a noble river, varying in width from half a mile to three hundred yards, for a distance of 100 miles from the Elbow; it then gradually contracts its channel and changes its character from a river full of sand-bars and mud-flats, pursuing a comparatively straight course, to a rapid and uniform torrent of water, sweeping down the narrow but deep valley it has excavated, from one bank to the other in magnificent curves, until it joins the North Branch. . . . The main Saskatchewan is a river of very imposing magnitude. Like the South Branch, it occupies a narrow, deep valley, varying in width from 1½ to 3 miles, extending a few miles below the Nepoween Mission. It flows in grand curves from side to side, and its general level is about

300 feet below the country through which it has excavated its channel, after which it enters the low region."

"About 158 miles below Fort à la Corne, near Tearing River, the main Saskatchewan is 330 yards broad, 92 feet deep in the channel, has a mean sectional depth of 20 feet, and flows at the rate of 2 miles an hour. 291 miles below the Grand Forks the main Saskatchewan enters Cedar Lake, 30 miles long. Issuing from this large body of water, it expands into a small lake, but soon again contracting its channel, the Cross Lake Rapids come into view; these rapids have a fall of 5¾ feet. Hudson's Bay Company's boats of 4 or 5 tons are tracked up them with half cargo, but loaded boats descending run the rapids. The length of the portage involved in ascending the river is 230 yards. The Saskatchewan now enters Cross Lake, and after issuing from this elongated expanse of water, begins a rapid course to Lake Winnipeg, with a current often 3 and sometimes 3½ miles an hour. The head of the Grand Rapids is about 4 miles from the mouth of the river. The length of the portage is 1 mile 7 chains. The rapids below the portage are about 1½ miles long, so that the total length of the Grand Rapids exceeds 2½ miles. The fall from the west to the east end of the portage, as ascertained by levelling, is 28½ feet. The fall below the portage is estimated to be 15 feet, consequently the total fall is about 43 feet."[1]

In the course of his report, the author, in connection with the discoveries of gold in British Columbia, shows how, until the construction of a railway, the great Saskatchewan River seems to be the natural highway between the valley of the Mississippi on one hand, and the St. Lawrence Valley by way of Lake Superior on the other, with the province on the Pacific slope of the Rocky Mountains. Already parties of American emigrants coming from St. Paul had been met, which were proceeding to Frazer's River via the North Branch, instead of by the Missouri route, which was considered more hazardous. A company, calling itself the Canadian North-West Transportation Company, was proposing to put in a line of steam-

[1] Hind, *op. cit.* pp. 9 and 29.

boats between the Red River as far as St. Paul and the North Saskatchewan, with a possible connection with Lake Superior by the Lake of the Woods. "In these projects, so rapidly approaching completion, the North Branch of the Saskatchewan is the route to be followed to British Columbia. In a word, public attention seems to be almost exclusively directed to Lake Winnipeg and the North Branch." [1]

As to the South Branch, the diversion of its waters down the Qu'Appelle Valley would make a communication for steamers possible from Fort Garry to near the foot of the Rocky Mountains, by way of the Assiniboine River: for this, a dam 85 feet high and 600 to 800 yards long across the South Branch, below the point of its junction with the Qu'Appelle River, should be sufficient. The settlements on the Red River would easily be protected from any possible resulting flood by means of a shallow cut through the gentle rise separating the Assiniboine from the Rat Rivulet, which would permit the excess waters to flow into Lake Manitoba.

While the project of the South Branch via the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle Rivers has since been abandoned, the other has been mentioned from time to time, principally during the last few years. The main difficulties are the Grand Rapids, at the point where the main river flows into Lake Winnipeg, and where a canal with locks has to be built, and the Coal Falls on the North Branch, just above the Grand Forks, where 18 miles of rapids obstructed by boulders, many of which are exposed during low summer levels, create serious engineering problems. These, however, may be in part solved after the construction of the big power dam being presently erected by the city of Prince Albert at that point.

Under the direct supervision of Mr. L. R. Voligny, District Engineer of the Department of Public Works, a survey of the Saskatchewan River from Prince Albert to the Pas was made in 1910 and 1911, disclosing the fact that between these two points, about 300 miles, a channel for boats drawing 6 feet of water could be provided at the comparatively low cost of $1,500,000. In 1912 the same work was continued between

[1] Hind, *op. cit.* p. 23.

Edmonton and Prince Albert, and in 1913 the work done in the three preceding years was reviewed, extending, however, beyond the Pas to Grand Rapids. Mr. Voligny's confidence in the feasibility of the project is well known. It embraces both branches, although the North Branch has been the only one to receive any attention so far, presumably because the cities and smaller places along the South Branch have not yet thought it advisable to ask for a survey of the latter. In the meantime, the different bridges which span the South Saskatchewan at different points are built with the end of navigation in view. The time set for the whole work from Edmonton to the Pas is five years.

The importance of the navigation of the two Saskatchewans in connection with the Hudson Bay Railway will be readily seen. Water routes being recognised to be so much cheaper than railways, barges laden with wheat may be floated down these two rivers, at an immense saving, to the Pas, there to be unloaded into the Hudson Bay trains for the last 424 miles of the inland route.

The immense possibilities of the project have made a writer, in one of the numbers of the *Canadian Magazine*, in 1911, exclaim with considerable appropriateness and foresight: "The future of the Saskatchewan is assured. To-day the Peace River country is on the eve of its development; to-morrow, as a new province, it will be sending its wheat to European markets by the cheapest and shortest route. And what is that route? Beyond all doubt, it is by way of the Saskatchewan River and Hudson's Bay. The expenditure of a few million dollars would make the river safely navigable as far as the Pas, where waiting trains would whisk the golden grain to the hold of transatlantic steamships. This is not a dream, but a prophecy. Railways may scoff, but the fact must soon be faced; the Saskatchewan is again coming into its own."[1]

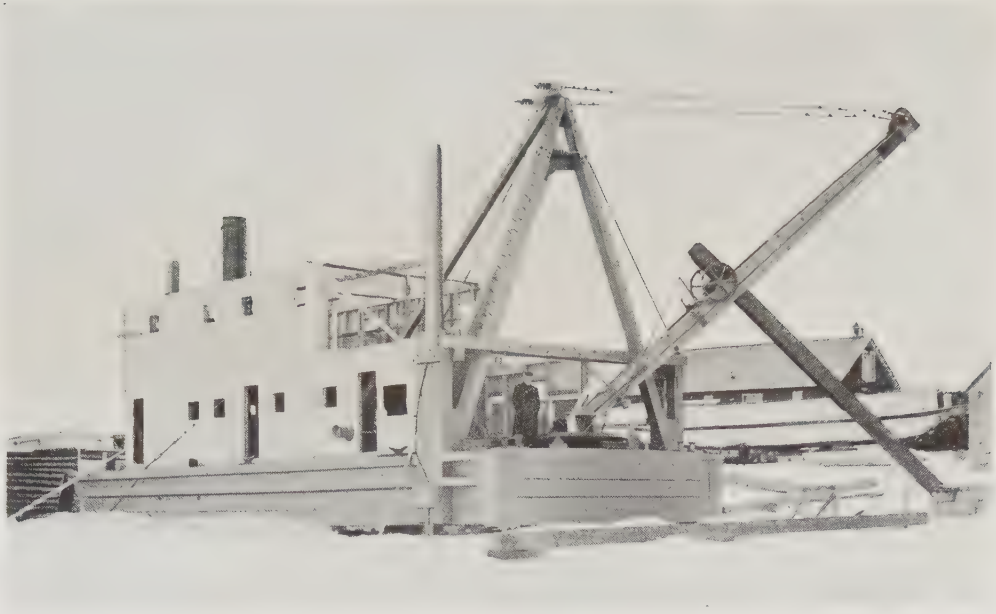
In the expectation of the traffic which should take place in this connection at the Pas, the Federal Government is now spending several thousand dollars in dredge work and on a wharf. What has been to this date the most important

[1] *The Navigation on the Saskatchewan*, by W. Everard Edmonds.

inland port between Winnipeg and the Rockies thus sees another impetus given to its already advantageous geographical position.

With time and the spending of several more million dollars it may be reasonably expected that the navigation of the Saskatchewan River, in relation to the Hudson Bay route, shall not stop at the Pas, but that it shall be continued past the Grand Rapids northward on Lake Winnipeg to Norway House and down the Nelson River, provided with a system of canals around its numerous rapids on the 200 odd miles where it is not now navigable, on to Port Nelson. The dream of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in which he saw an immense waterway from the foot of the Rocky Mountains to Winnipeg, forsooth to Quebec via the Lake of the Woods and the Great Lakes, will then not only be realised but exceeded to the extent of making several western cities seaports in miniature, in which the products of the farms may be loaded in barges which will only be transhipped to the transatlantic vessels at the terminals of the Hudson Bay route. Imagination may even go one better and picture to itself the ironclad monsters steaming along the different rivers of the Nelson basin, far inland, for or with their cargoes. In the meantime, on March 5, 1912, an organisation called the "Red River to the Hudson Bay Navigation Association," with Mr. R. D. Waugh, then Mayor of Winnipeg, as president, was formed at Grand Forks, in North Dakota, for the purpose of advocating the creation of an all-water route to Hudson Bay: which may serve to demonstrate that the scheme is not all dream for some enthusiastic westerners.[1]

[1] It may be safely said, however, that many generations will pass before the immense difficulties along the Nelson River will be surmounted. Indeed, what is required, except possibly for the 60 miles between Cross Lake and Manitou Rapids, is a continuous canal. Even that will be found hardly sufficient on account of the rapid drop towards Hudson Bay. As an example, it may be stated that reliable engineers in the employ of the Hudson Bay Railway have figured on the necessity of providing no less than twenty-seven locks to go through Gull Lake alone, a mere expanse of the Nelson River. As one of them puts it: "A season would not be sufficient to carry a boat from Port Nelson to Lake Winnipeg." Of course, it is difficult to picture to one's mind



Building the Dredge, now in use on the Saskatchewan River at the Pas, winter 1913-14

" With the advent of the iron horse the west went railroad mad," some one has said very pointedly. This madness will pass away and the rivers will again have their days of usefulness as the most natural highways of commerce.

the millions which would have to be spent to build this gigantic canal from lake to bay. The possibility of a continuous navigation from Port Nelson seems to be wholly of the domain of conjecture and utopia.

CHAPTER XVI

EXTENSION OF MANITOBA'S BOUNDARIES

"It is more than thirty years since I made my first speech claiming extended boundaries and equality in regard to our financial relations with the Dominion." So spoke Premier Roblin on February 29, 1912, on learning that the agreement arrived at between Premier Borden on the one hand and himself with the Honourable C. H. Campbell on the other, the previous fall, had at last been practically ratified by the House of Commons.

The victory of Manitoba in this connection was the provincial event of the year. Manitoba, since its formation in 1870, had been curbed in her eastern and western expansions by the claims of Ontario, the requirements of the Hudson's Bay Company, the evolution of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and the development of Dominion-wide educational and political problems. With its 73,732 square miles it had long remained the "postage stamp" province. Apparently on account of political differences, no agreement could be arrived at with the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier; when Mr. Borden became Premier in 1911, it was evident all difficulties would be levelled: Manitoba would have a part of Keewatin with at least one port, possibly two, on Hudson Bay.

At the end of January, conferences were held in Ottawa between the Federal Cabinet and Premier Roblin assisted by Honourable C. H. Campbell. The following agreement was struck:

SUBSIDIES, ETC., FOR YEAR ENDING JULY 1, 1912

	$
Allowance for government and local purposes, B.N.A. Act, 1907	190,000.00
Eighty cents per head per annum on 455,614 population as ascertained by the census of June 1911	364,491.20
Indemnity for want of public lands (cap. 50, Acts of 1885)	100,000.00
Interest at 5 per cent. on capital allowance in lieu of debt	178,947.66
Total	$833,438.86

			$
Allowance for government and local purposes, B.N.A. Act, 1907			190,000.00
Eighty cents per head on 455,614 population as per the census of June 1911, B.N.A. Act, 1907, sec. 1			364,491.20
Indemnity for want of public lands		$562,500.00	
Swamp lands deduction, about $134,230.00			
University lands deduction	15,000.00		
		149,230.00	
Interest at 5 per cent. on $8,107,500		405,375.00	413,270.00
Less interest at 5 per cent. on $475,816.15		23,790.81	
			381,584.19
Total			$1,349,345.39

While the Manitoba ministers insisted on recognition of the allowances dating from 1905, being the year in which the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta had been formed, the Ottawa authorities refused to acknowledge them except as from July 1908, the date on which the Parliament of Canada had assented to the extension of the province's boundaries. The arrearages payable to Manitoba on that account were as follows:

				$
(*a*)	Annual allowance in lieu of debt under Bill			381,584.19
	Annual allowance already received			178,947.06
	Arrearages each year			202,637.13
	Arrearages for four years, July 1, 1908, to June 30, 1912			810,648.52
(*b*)	Annual allowance in lieu of lands under Bill			562,500.00
	Swamp lands deduction, average, say	$105,500.00		
	University lands deduction	15,000.00		
	Already received	100,000.00		
				220,500.00

Deducting that sum of $220,500 from the proposed annual allowance in lieu of lands under this resolution, namely, $562,500, the difference is found to be $342,000. The estimated arrearage each year will, therefore, be $342,000, or for four years the sum of $1,368,000. Adding that to the sum of $810,648, above mentioned, we have the estimated total arrearages of $2,178,648.

Swamp lands to be reconveyed to the Dominion totalled 8,232,831 acres.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Honourable W. Pugsley both objected to the arrangement as being unfair to the older provinces. Mr. Borden showed that the arrangement was a fair, equal treatment: Manitoba would thus receive $1,349,345, Alberta $1,260,105, and Saskatchewan $1,551,280. Subsequent to the passing of the resolution, Premier Borden stated that the area of Manitoba would change from 73,732 square miles to 251,832 square miles.

Premier Roblin, in expressing his satisfaction at the arrangement, outlined what uses his government would make of the $2,178,648 grant: a new agricultural college would be built, technical and industrial education would receive special attention, a good roads policy would be inaugurated, the new territory would receive considerable financial help.

The Liberal element of the province complained bitterly of two aspects of the agreement reached: the five-mile-wide strip through New Manitoba given to Ontario in order to connect that province with Port Nelson, and the reconveying of the natural resources to the Dominion.

Shortly after the Bill had become law in the Dominion House, Premier Roblin presented an Act in the Legislature of Manitoba, March 28, to corroborate it. The total amount to be received from Ottawa, including arrearages, stood at $2,896,387.

Mr. Norris, Opposition leader, congratulated the premier on the cash bonus secured, but pointed out that if the province had retained her natural resources, the interest on the value of the swamp lands alone, as offered by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, would have represented a better revenue, with the $200,000 annual grant for the added territory, than had been secured under the present arrangements. The Bill passed, however, without division, on April 1, and on May 20 a cheque for $2,178,648 was received from Ottawa.

Arrangements were also made for a continuance of Mounted Police duty in the new territory, with the province paying a share of the expense.

At Ottawa, however, the settlement of the Manitoba boundary question had not gone through the House of

Commons and the Senate without considerable debate on the school question in its relation to the new territory. It was alleged that under the North-West Territories Act of 1875 separate schools were permitted in Keewatin, and that therefore the existing Roman Catholic school established by Bishop Charlebois at the Pas should be considered as a precedent in the safeguarding of the minority's rights in New Manitoba. The Quebec supporters of the government were unanimous in demanding that such a clause should be inserted in the Bill before the House. The Nationalists, by speech and in the press, worked strenuously to force the government's hand. On February 23, however, the resolutions presented by Premier Borden contained nothing in reference to education: nor did the amendment of the leader of the Opposition mention the question. The amendment was rejected by 103 to 65.

It was only after the vote had so been taken on the second reading that P. E. Lamarche of Nicolet dealt with the matter, stating that "it would not be a policy of coercion but rather a policy of conciliation to insert in the Bill a saving clause for the rights of the minorities in the new district to be annexed." Mr. Monk, who followed, contended that inasmuch as the petitions of the Roman Catholics of the Pas for schools in 1909 had not been granted by the late government, by reason of lack of ordinances to that effect applicable to the territory, there were no legal rights whatever to safeguard: "As a matter of pure policy to say we will place that condition upon any transfer of territory would be absolutely contrary to the best interests of the minority in that province."

Honourable L. P. Pelletier, who followed, believed Premier Roblin would yet do justice to the Catholics of Manitoba. Honourable R. Lemieux, for the Opposition, described Keewatin as being under the revised statutes of Canada since January 31, 1907. Section 10 of these statutes provided that certain things could be done in an educational connection by the Commissioner-in-Council, if and when a territorial council was appointed and authorised to make ordinances; neither of these conditions had yet been carried out, so that there could

be no separate schools, by law, in existence. He expressed the opinion that Manitoba would not accept the extension of her boundaries coupled with any restriction as to education: besides, it was not constitutionally possible, and it was certainly politically impracticable. The second reading passed by 114 to 76 without any reference to separate schools, the new territory thus passing automatically under the laws of Manitoba.

In committee the discussion continued. A. A. Mondou of Yamaska moved that "nothing in the present Act shall affect prejudicially the school rights of the minority, Roman Catholic or Protestant, which inhabit the territory now annexed to Manitoba." It was negatived on division.

On the third reading of the Bill, March 12, the Honourable J. C. Doherty, Minister of Justice, spoke and defined the issue as follows: "The question that does arise, which has been the source of a very great deal of strong feeling and which has given to many of us who have a sense of responsibility much matter of careful thought, is the question whether in this territory that is going to be annexed to Manitoba there are existing rights established by law and which would require for their protection the inclusion of some special provision in this legislation." He answered the question in the negative and with a clear, concise summary of the whole matter. Mr. Mondou moved again the amendment which he had presented in committee, though with some changes: "Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational or separate schools, which any class of persons have, at the date of the passing of this Act, by law or practice, in the territory added to the province under the provisions of this Act."

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who then spoke for the first time since the commencement of the debate, gave it as his opinion that unless Manitoba agreed to the law of 1875, parliament had no authority to force it upon her; that it was a matter of conciliation. Mr. Mondou's motion was defeated with 160 against and 24 for. Another amendment, moved by Dr. Béland, asking for amicable negotiations with the Manitoba

River Navigation in Northern Manitoba

Government to define the status of minorities, was also defeated by 108 to 52. The Bill was then read a third time. It passed the Senate with hardly any discussion, in spite of the many petitions presented to this honourable body by the minority of Keewatin and its friends in Quebec, where Henri Bourassa, Armand Lavergne, and C. H. Cahan addressed meetings and adopted resolutions, urging the government to recognise the rights of the Catholics in the territory to be annexed to Manitoba.

On the other hand, the Orange factor was not inactive: it availed itself of every opportunity to denounce " all forms of sectarian education in any part of the province," and after the third reading of the Bill, approved the Dominion Government's action. At the 53rd annual meeting of the Grand Lodge of Ontario East, Kingston, on March 20, Colonel John Hughes, Grand Master, made this statement: " The French-Canadian bishops and their emissaries wished for a separate school clause for the territory included in the Bill, and brought all the pressure they could possibly do upon the members of the house and the government to secure such a result. They did all in their power by intimidation, by threats, and by appeals to race and religion. It was a supreme struggle between Church and State for supremacy. The government were threatened with defeat, but they stuck manfully to their guns."

The denominational Roman Catholic school established by Bishop Charlebois at the Pas in the fall of 1911 is still in existence: it is supported by the voluntary donations of the parents and their friends.[1] At the census taken by the Board of Trade of the town in August 1913, it showed an enrolment of 63 with an average attendance of 59.[2]

[1] Since this was written, the Roman Catholic School has been taken over by the Public School Board of the town, on the understanding that only Roman Catholic teachers shall be employed to teach Roman Catholic children, and that the latter shall occupy separate rooms.

[2] The greater portion of the data for this chapter have been furnished me by the great work of Mr. Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review.*

CHAPTER XVII

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

When it became evident that the Manitoba boundary question would soon be settled, the few white inhabitants of the district to be annexed, while considerably removed from the rest of the country, began to organise to have their rights and claims recognised. The movement was started by the *Hudson's Bay Herald*, a newspaper recently established at the Pas, which in an editorial under date of January 18, 1912, called the attention of its readers to the advisability of being consulted by the men at the head of affairs in Manitoba. Said the *Herald:* "We are not without information as to what Manitoba is to receive, but, so far as we have seen, no one proposes to consult the inhabitants of the area to be added. They all calmly assume that the inhabitants of the north are willing to be Manitobans, and so we are, but on fair and equitable terms." Then, after enumerating the different claims of the new territory: "The *Hudson's Bay Herald* therefore suggests that a meeting of the citizens be called to consider these questions. We believe the meeting would be well advised if it would extend an invitation to Premier Roblin to visit Le Pas at an early date and 'press his suit.' Mr. Roblin to-day is, as far as we are concerned, in the position of a wooer who has got the consent of the old people first. It is time that he paid some attention to the fair daughter that he proposes to wed. Let him come. Let him be cordially invited to come to Le Pas and discuss the terms of the marriage settlement."

Meetings of the citizens were held,[1] an invitation was wired

[1] The members of the committee chosen to invite and welcome Premier Roblin were: G. Halcrow, Senior (Chairman), Dr. Wm. Sinclair, J. Clark, Dr. A. Larose, H. S. Johnson, J. E. Rusk, Captain H. H. Ross, W. H. Bunting, T. H. P. Lamb, Rev. A. Fraser, Rev. E. Trigg, F. Fischer, R. Kerr, and A. H. de Trémaudan (Secretary).

Taking the "Herald" to the Pas Post Office, January 18, 1912

to Premier Roblin to come to the Pas to discuss the proposed admittance of Keewatin into Manitoba. The invitation was readily accepted, and on February 16, 1912, Premier Roblin, accompanied by Honourable Hugh Armstrong, Provincial Treasurer, and a number of Winnipeg friends, arrived at the Pas.

In the evening the following address[1] was read to the honoured visitor:

" To the Honourable Rodmond Palen Roblin, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Premier, Minister of Agriculture, Commissioner of Railways for the Province of Manitoba.

" Honourable Sir: It is a great pleasure and an unprecedented honour for the district included in the proposed extension of the Province of Manitoba, and for the town of Le Pas in particular, to have the opportunity of welcoming you on your first official visit to Greater Manitoba.

" While the citizens of this place take the liberty of calling it a town, no organisation has taken place, otherwise we would have been pleased to extend to you and your party the franchise of the corporation.

" We are pleased that you have recognised that this territory should not be considered as a mere chattel, but that matters pertaining to its admission into the Province, at the head of whose affairs you have been placed, by the public confidence, should be discussed with its citizens.

" We have claims, which we consider just and reasonable, to present to you. We have studied them carefully, and will define their importance as clearly as possible.

" The most important of these claims is parliamentary representation, both in the Federal House and in the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

" The representation at Ottawa is a matter which we think may be defined in the Bill which will be presented to the Federal House and approved by the Legislature of your

[1] This address had been prepared by G. Halcrow, Senior, Dr. Wm. Sinclair, and A. H. de Trémaudan, and revised by a committee composed of those three gentlemen with the addition of Captain H. H. Ross and H. S. Johnson.

Province. We feel that provision should be made whereby the new territory should have one member in the present Parliament.

" As to our representation at Winnipeg, owing to the vastness of our district and the difficulty for the elected members to visit their constituents, we feel that no less than two members should be allowed to us, and that provision should be made for their election as soon as the boundary question is settled.

" There are several public institutions which we shall require immediately, prominent among which are a judicial district, a land titles office, police headquarters, telephones, with the usual officials connected therewith, and the buildings required for the different departments.

" Accompanying the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway, the influx of settlers, labourers, and industrial workmen will be so large that such institutions shall be found an immediate and absolute necessity. A court house and jail with a resident judge and the usual minor officials, together with police headquarters, must be provided at once.

" These are most important and urgent needs, in a country where for some time there will be so many men of all nationalities, working on railway construction, and in the lumber camps and mills, and possibly, also, in the mines and quarries which are expected to open up with the advent of the railway.

" Le Pas, having been recognised for almost a century as one of the strategic points of Canada, is the only natural place where these buildings and offices may be located to any general advantage.

" Le Pas will also soon be the radiating point of a district where settlers will take up land. A land titles office will therefore be found necessary from the beginning to deal with the business properly. Already many parties here, and in the surrounding district, have titles to land with which they find it very difficult to deal under present conditions.

" The telephone system could easily be extended from Dauphin through Swan River and Barrows to connect at Le Pas, while a local system is an absolute necessity.

" We are informed that the debt of Manitoba is about $15,500,000, in addition to many millions of indirect liability in the form of railway bonds, etc. These liabilities are at present spread over an area of 73,732 square miles. When the boundaries are extended they will be spread over 251,832 square miles. We will not have benefited through the expenditure of any of that money, though it is quite evident we shall have to help repay a very large portion of it. It seems, therefore, only reasonable that a compensation should be allowed in the form of special grants for roads, drains, high schools, hospitals, etc., as the needs arise.

" Again, the allowance by money payment from the Federal Government will be considerably increased on account of this added area. All of this increase, with the exception of the added cost of administration, should be spent in bringing the new district on a par with the older portion of Greater Manitoba.

" As the fur trade is a very important part of our resources, especially in the northern part of the district, and as the restrictions of the present game laws of Manitoba are too drastic in some cases, we think that a special game act could be made applicable to the new district, retaining for the Indian, trapper, voyageur and traveller, the privileges they now enjoy, at least until such time as conditions will warrant the introduction of more severe legislation.

" There are also some matters that may be of a federal nature, but which we believe may be brought to your attention with the humble request that you use your influence and that of your government in dealing with them to our benefit, and that of the Manitoba to be.

" As construction progresses settlers will be taking up land along the Hudson Bay Road, as it is shown that thousands of acres of good grain-growing land are available for cultivation. A Dominion land office will be an almost immediate necessity.

" The value of the equipment of boats sailing from Le Pas amounts already to $100,000 or more. Any harbour, docks, or facilities of this nature have so far been provided by private efforts and finance. Immediate improved accommodation is required.

"Data already published by the Federal Government show that there are several millions of acres of the best alluvial soil along the Saskatchewan River and its tributaries which could be reclaimed at a very inconsiderable cost per acre, by lowering the basin of the river. Dredging and providing the river with locks, would at the same time improve navigation. Your government would be well advised to co-operate with the Dominion Government in carrying out this work.

"Speaking generally, we naturally expect that it will please you and your government to accord us a treatment proportioned to the conditions in which this district will be found on its admission into Manitoba.

"Such are the different claims and requests that we feel justified to place before you. We trust that none of them will appear unreasonable, and that the marriage settlement, mentioned some few weeks ago by our local press, may be both easy and agreeable.

"For the citizens of the new territory to be added to the Province of Manitoba in meeting assembled at Le Pas, this twelfth day of February, A.D. 1912.

"G. HALCROW, SR., *Chairman*."

In advancing to make his reply, Premier Roblin [1] was greeted

[1] A copy of the *Herald*, containing a full report of the different functions of the day, including the address to and the reply of Premier Roblin, was mailed to him under special cover. His reply follows:

"PROVINCE OF MANITOBA,
"Premier's Office.

"*February 27*, 1912.

"A. H. DE TRÉMAUDAN, Esq.,
"Le Pas, N.W.T.

"MY DEAR TRÉMAUDAN.—I have just received the issue of the *Herald* of the 22nd, and have read both your editorial and the report of the public meeting at which I was present recently in your town. I write to thank you for the exceedingly kind words that you there set down, and to assure you that it will be my ambition to merit every good thing that you have said.

"Unfortunately not much progress has been made at Ottawa since I was with you. I hope that the matter will take shape and form at once, and that we will know just what is going to happen in the course of a few days or weeks at the furthest. In the meantime we have nothing to do but wait, but I firmly believe everything will come out right, and

Visit of Premier Roblin to the Pas, February 16, 1912
A small portion of Sir Rodmond Roblin's face may be seen behind the second figure on the right

with long and repeated applause. He thanked the people of the Pas for their kind invitation of a few days past to visit their city, and expressed his pleasure at meeting them. The fact that he had travelled almost 500 miles to judge *de visu* of the great resources of Northern Canada, was a proof of the interest that he was taking in this great hinterland. His coming to the Pas reminded him of his arrival at Winnipeg thirty-five years ago, when that city was nothing more than a small village, far from having the advantages that the Pas had. There was a great future ahead of this town. A more beautiful site for a city he had never seen; with unity amongst its citizens, industry, and enterprise, there was no reason why this town should not grow rapidly. Everything that he had expected, and more, had been realised. His reason for coming, besides the invitation that he had received, was the change of boundaries of the Province of Manitoba soon to take place. He felt that it was right for him to come and discuss the conditions under which the new territory would be admitted into Manitoba. He had been thirty-one years in public life, and during that time had never seen a greater opportunity for development in the country than at the present time, with the Hudson Bay Road being rushed to completion. For thirty years he had advocated the construction of this road and the extending of Manitoba's boundaries, but not until the Borden Government had come into power had there been any likelihood of these two requirements being fulfilled; for thirty years he had pressed upon the different federal administrations the justice of Manitoba's claim that the eastern boundary along the 89th degree of latitude which had been recognised in 1880 should be adhered to. But

if it does, with the union of the north-west territories as outlined as a future portion of Manitoba, and the older part of the province, we can together go forward along the line of provincial development to a point of greatness that will give us a proud position in this Dominion. To this end I am sure that we will all work, and a great deal depends upon leaders of public thought like yourself, and I must say that I am pleased with the high and patriotic course and position that you are taking in this connection.

"With assurances of my kindest regards, believe me to be, Yours very truly,—R. P. Roblin."

Ontario, in the reference of the matter to the Privy Council, had won its case. In 1901 the Parliament of Canada had recognised the justice of Manitoba's claims for an extension of boundaries, but a settlement had been delayed until after the formation of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Since then, owing to the late federal administration having refused to treat Manitoba on the same financial basis as the new provinces, it had remained a postage stamp on the map of Canada. It had been left to Premier Borden to say that Manitoba's boundaries should be extended to Hudson Bay and that it should receive a subsidy on a par with those of the new provinces. The greatest difficulty had been the minority in Manitoba who would make people believe that he was a "being with hoofs and horns"; an evil spirit. He had thought he should show that he was not quite so bad as that.

He would now deal with the address, which looked to him a rather considerable bill of fare, in which nothing had been left out. He felt that if he was able to digest it all there would not be much left of him to continue his duties as Premier of Manitoba. He would explain that the part of the territory which was to go into Manitoba was a part of land which no one had ever asked for. While he was not in a position to guarantee anything, the bill not having been introduced in the House of Commons, he could state that both the Federal and his government had agreed on boundaries and financial arrangements, and that confirmation by both Houses was all that was needed; this being done, Manitoba would have equality with the other provinces. He thought that if he were able to accomplish this, not only would Manitoba lead, but it would outstrip all other provinces and become the key-stone of Canada. He admired the business-like, direct way in which the address had been constructed and the citizens of the Pas had approached him. He felt sure that the Federal Government would give them fair play as to representation. As far as the Legislature of Manitoba was concerned, the House would meet on February 22, when he would introduce a measure for one member to represent this territory as soon as possible, if not for this session, certainly for the next one.

Then the people of the new territory would have a man in the House to see that their rights were protected. As progress would take place, additional representation would be granted.[1] There were here wonderful possibilities in the fisheries, the forests, the minerals, and other resources, including agriculture. Farmers would soon come and locate here. All institutions asked for would be granted as conditions warranted. Regarding telephones, there had been enough noise made on the advertised question to deafen a bronze statue, and if the opposition papers were to be believed, the system was bad, and it should be undesirable for any town to obtain the installation of any. He could not promise any long-distance connection at present, but a local system would be built just as soon as the boundaries were extended and the place had organised municipally. He would deny most emphatically that the debts of Manitoba were as high as mentioned in the address, which showed the evil ways his opponents were using to discredit him. Provincial Treasurer Armstrong would deal with the question. This statement regarding the debt and also the following statement, that the increase of subsidy should all be spent in the new territory, showed how carefully the address had been prepared. However, the increased portion of the subsidy was not being granted wholly on account of the new territory, but by virtue of a rearrangement of financial terms. If Dr. Sinclair[2] meant that the portion granted on account of the new territory should be spent so, then he was quite prepared to promise that there would be no cause for complaint. As to the game laws, he would admit the fairness of the request made and see that the law of Manitoba was so amended as not to disturb the present conditions. He would suggest that the game guardian be sent to Winnipeg to present the claims of those interested to the House. He would promise to use his influence with the Federal Government to obtain the necessary harbours, docks, and other facilities of the same nature required. The greater part of the efforts of Greater Manitoba would no doubt be

[1] New Manitoba has now three members. The names of the seats are: The Pas, Grand Rapids, and Churchill-Nelson.

[2] Dr. Sinclair had read the address.

spent on the new territory. If the developments at the Pas, which had surprised him and his friends, were indications of what could be done in the district, there was every probability that with the added advantages that it would have, Manitoba would become the foremost province in the Dominion. If, as small as it had been in the past, Manitoba had attained such an enviable place as it had attained, what would it become when maritime opportunities would be given it? We would then all be proud of being citizens of Manitoba. When he would return in the fall he felt sure that he would then find at the Pas a city of 4000 or 5000 people.

The loud applause having subsided Provincial Treasurer Armstrong followed. He had tried to get out of coming but Premier Roblin had insisted, and as they of the cabinet had always been accustomed to consider him as "the boss," he had had to surrender. The rest of the province would be very pleased to welcome the new territory. There could be no doubt about the Pas becoming one of the great cities of Manitoba. On account of its geographical position, in fact, it should become the second city in the province. The statement concerning the debt of Manitoba embodied in the address was a proof of what the Opposition was ready to resort to for the sake of discrediting the present administration of Manitoba. Recently it had gone so far as stating that he would resign on account of disagreement with the other ministers. Since 1900 not $1 had been borrowed for current expenses, and out of the revenue of the province, buildings, representing a large sum of money, had been erected. There was an indirect liability by way of railway bonds, but this was secured by a mortgage on the properties of the railway companies which had secured the government's signature. Manitoba had $9,000,000 invested in telephones, and $1,000,000 in grain elevators. Outside of these sums there was not $1 of public debt. The fact that the province was able to borrow money on the London market at $2\frac{3}{16}$ per cent. was pretty good evidence that its credit was as good as that of any other province. Under the old federal system Manitoba had been receiving $1,000,000 less than the other two western provinces, which

received interest on $8,000,000, while Manitoba received interest only on $3,700,000. Saskatchewan was receiving a subsidy of $800,000. Manitoba was getting only $500,000. He was pleased that Premier Roblin was on the eve of obtaining a square deal.

There were in the party men representing various industries, finances, and newspapers, who were most taken up with the position of the Pas and the new district. He would thank the citizens for the splendid reception given to the party, and hoped that some one would convey his and the rest of the visitors' thanks to the ladies, who had prepared the beautiful banquet at which they had dined.

A local speaker showed the absolute necessity for the establishment of a customs office for the new district of the Pas, a request which had been inadvertently left out of the address. There were a number of other speakers on the different questions at issue.

In reply to a remark by one of the local men that he had not specifically promised granting the requests of the new territory, Mr. Roblin stated that he wished the people to understand that public money was not expended according to the size of a district, but as needs would arise at local points, such as the Pas, Churchill, or York Factory. Manitoba was not absorbing the North-West Territory, but was forming a union with it, to make Greater Manitoba the greatest province of the Dominion. He was very much impressed with the business manners, not only of the white people, but also of the Indians, and wished to thank their chief for his words of welcome.[1] He would assure them that their rights would be protected. He did not know of any place where public moneys could be expended to better advantage than at the Pas; no place had a greater future; nothing could stop its progress. He had visited many places in his public life, and, honestly and truthfully, he had never gone to a town, where he was a total stranger, where he had been so well received. He would rather have the good-will and the esteem of his countrymen

[1] See the whole of the Indian chief's address, *infra*, end of Chapter XIX.

between the 45th parallel and the shores of Hudson Bay than the fortune of a Rothschild or the wealth of the Orient.

The address presented to Premier Roblin and his reply on February 16, 1912, at the Pas, form, so to speak, the charter of New Manitoba: grants and other public measures affecting that portion of the northland since that date have all been and are still based on the demands and promises made on that memorable day; as Premier Roblin said, in a familiar way, in the course of his main speech, there had been nothing forgotten in the address, and he had found himself in the obligation of defining the policy of his government on every important point in which the new territory was interested.[1]

[1] A tangible result of the intelligent move taken by the citizens of the Pas on this occasion is that the following institutions, or improvements, have been, or are in course of being, secured for their town: judicial centre with court house and jail, headquarters for Royal North-West Mounted Police detachment, cash grants, guarantee of civic debentures, Dominion land office, customs house, river dredging and wharves, local telephones, etc.

CHAPTER XVIII

CLIMATE

Because Manitoba's new territory is some hundred miles further north than the rest of the province it is imagined that the climate is very rigorous. This is a totally wrong impression. No doubt, in winter, the thermometer will go down somewhat lower than at points a distance south, but it must be remembered that in summer the days are longer. "A region lying in a higher latitude, though showing a lower yearly average temperature, may during the growing months, owing to its longer hours of sunshine, have quite as good an average."[1]

A traveller in those regions, Mr. J. W. M'Laggan of Strathcona, remarks: "The summer seems to be good, and where good land is found there should be no trouble to raise crops of all hardy grains and vegetables." The climate seemed good to Mr. M'Laggan in the first week of September. The foliage was green; there was no sign of severe frost, and butterflies, hornets, and other insects were numerous and active. The first frost noted was on August 31, "but not enough to damage wheat." The weather was fine in the morning and it rained in the afternoon. Near Cormorant Lake he saw, on August 27, a garden of "potatoes, carrots, onions, turnips, and cabbage doing well with no sign of frost." On September 13 he noted that the weather was fine but cold, with a heavy frost in the morning; that the leaves were falling, and that it began to look like autumn. Considerable rain followed, which, on October 4, gave place to snow, to be followed by rain. The night of October 7 is noted as the first really cold one of the season; but the morning brought rain. There was snow again on the 8th with

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 25.

high wind and ice on the water along the shore of Goose Lake. It was "fine and warm" on the 11th, and "clear and cold" on the 13th when he reached the Pas on his return.[1]

"The cold at Nelson House is no more intense than that of a winter in Northern Manitoba as at present constituted," says the Reverend John Semmens, who spent several years as a missionary in the north country on the banks of the Burntwood River at Nelson House, "but the frost sets in rather sooner, and tarries rather longer than it does at the north end of Lake Winnipeg. Roots and vegetables planted about May 24 do well and are gathered about September 15. The presence of so much water so regulates the temperature that there are few frosts either early or late to make growth uncertain; yet, in my experience, wheat is not a sure crop. All depends upon the season. Oats and barley will do well any time."[2]

Rev. Dr. John M'Dougall, a pioneer missionary of the west, thus describes the country to the south of Split Lake: "There are but two seasons there—summer and winter—each fitting into the other with little or no spring or fall. This, to a large extent, does away with the broken weather which is so often experienced in the east at the changing of the seasons, and makes the conditions more favourable for settlement. The winter is steady and pleasant, and although cold, is not nearly so severe as is generally supposed. In fact, the climate is far more moderate than in Southern Manitoba, the home of 'No. 1 Hard' wheat. The summer begins early and the growth and vegetation are almost of a tropical character. This is attributable to the longer hours of sunshine that prevail and the proximity of streams of

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 27. In his very interesting little book entitled *First Pastoral Visit to the Indian Missions*, Mgr. Ovide Charlebois, O.M.I., Bishop of Bérénice, Vicar-Apostolic of Keewatin, with residence at the Pas, writes under date September 29, 5 p.m. (1911), from Grand Rapids: "The weather was calm this morning, but very cold. The water froze at the sides of the canoe, and on the paddles. It did the same in my cruet while I was saying Mass in the tent. However, a fine sun came in good time to warm up the atmosphere, so that we feel more comfortable at present" (p. 69).

[2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 28.

Summer Scene in the Arctic

Photo by Capt. French of the R.N.W.M.P., 1914.

living waters everywhere in the district, each of which is conducive to plant nourishment." [1]

As early as 1774, Arthur Dobbs, the historian of La France about whom we have read, wrote: "There might be comfortable settlements made in most places, and very tolerable even in the worst and coldest parts of that continent, which are the north-east and north-west sides of the bay; but on the southern and western sides of the bay there might be made as comfortable settlements as in Sweden, Livonia, or on the south side of the Baltic; and farther into the country south-west the climate is as good as the southern part of Poland and northern part of Germany and Holland." [2]

In 1752, Robson, the architect of Fort Prince of Wales, had a similar opinion: "I have seen a small pea growing without any culture (at York Factory). Most kinds of garden stuff, particularly pease and beans, grow here to perfection. . . . I am of opinion that barley would flourish. . . . Gooseberries and red and black currants are found in the woods growing upon such bushes as in England. . . . I should expect by no more labour than would be proper for my health to procure a desirable livelihood; not at all doubting of my being able to raise pease and beans, barley and probably other kinds of grain (on Hayes River). . . . The natural produce of Hudson Bay grows very fast, and comes to perfection much sooner than that of England. There is no spring or fall—a leap from winter to summer. . . . The soil is fertile, the climate temperate, fit for the produce of all kinds of grain and for raising flocks of tame cattle. . . . At Churchill horses and cows have been kept in winter, though greatly exposed to the frost and cold, . . . at Moose Factory sown wheat has stood the winter frosts and grown very well the summer following, . . . black cherries also planted here have grown and borne fruit, as would other trees if propagated; . . . the climate is not worse than that of Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Poland and North Germany." [3]

"Captain Middleton reached Churchill on August 10,

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 30. [2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 39.
[3] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 38.

1741, and wintered there. His records evidence no great severity of weather. The first snow fell on September 1. The geese then went southward. By October 18 it became really cold and winter weather continued; but by March 17 it grew milder, and by April 2 the record is, 'calm and warm, with a clear sky.' There was, of course, frost after that." [1]

Mr. E. Mosher, of Halifax, was at Churchill from September 2 to January 7, superintending the construction of buildings for the Royal North-West Mounted Police. "So far," he said, "as the weather is concerned, I would as soon have spent the months in Churchill as in Halifax." He "did not find the cold any more severe than in the east." According to his observations, "the lowest temperature registered was 39° below zero." [2]

Speaking of his trip between Fort Churchill and the Pas in the fall of 1906 and the following winter, W. Thibeaudeau, civil engineer, writes in his report: "September was very windy, rather cold, and a few days of rain. October, splendid weather, bright and clear. November, some snow and rather windy. December, colder and more snow. The coldest day was 49° below zero on one day." [3]

Professor Macoun, whose optimism with regard to the north country is well known and whose name will be handed down to posterity in Canada in this respect, says: "In conclusion, I may say that the climate of the whole northland is a stable one, and as local conditions change it will improve, and where small spots are now called good land whole areas will take that term. The low altitude and the long day are fixed conditions and will always be the same. The forest will be cleared and the muskegs drained, and as the land becomes drier the frosty conditions will pass away and a good country will result." [4]

Let us now hear what Mr. R. F. Stupart, Director of the Meteorological Service for the Dominion of Canada, had to

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 43.
[2] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 43.
[3] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 52.
[4] *Canada's Fertile Northland*, Evidence of Mr. R. E. Young, D.L.S., Superintendent of Railway Lands, before the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonisation, 1907–8, p. 151.

say in his evidence before the Select Committee of the Senate, April 5, 1907. The report, published under the direction of Mr. R. E. Young, D.L.S., Chief Geographer, reads as follows: "As to the isothermal lines of that part of the country lying south and west of Split Lake on the route of the proposed railway between the head of the Pas and Churchill, Mr. Stupart explained that in the month of June the district in question is between the isothermal line of 50 and 55. The corresponding isothermal district in Europe would be the extreme north of Scotland in June. In July that district is between the isothermal lines 55 and 60, and that would correspond with Scotland and a portion of Scandinavia. In the month of August the district in question is about 55, and there you have Scotland again. That country had a reasonably fair climate for the three summer months, June, July, and August." The lowest temperature he had at Cape Prince of Wales in the winter of 1884-85 was 38° below zero, but the average temperature was 23½°.[1]

In the same book there is given the report of Mr. William M'Innes, M.A., geologist, before the same committee: "Mr. M'Innes said he could not very well closely indicate the isothermal line on the part of the country he had explored last year, but he could say that the country averaged from four to five degrees in the summer months higher temperature than the same latitude further west. He thought that the isothermal line which would go past the north end of the country he had been speaking of would come down as far as the north shore of Lake Superior, which would be a very long distance south. He had records kept during all summer of the temperatures through that western country, and he had a summary of the record kept in the preceding summers.

"He was rather surprised at the warmth of that western country in summer. He was surprised at the way heat kept up in the evenings. He kept the thermometer readings morning, noon and six o'clock in the evening, and found the six o'clock temperatures were almost as warm as the noon

[1] *The New North-West, The Senate Report of* 1907, published under the direction of R. E. Young, D.L.S., Chief Geographer, etc., p. 133.

temperatures. That country has a very long day in summer. The day in those high latitudes is very much longer, and the growing time proportionately longer. In June they have about eighteen hours of daylight.

"As to the district where he found the 170 miles of agricultural land he had described, he only reached there about the middle of June. There was no frost in the balance of June or in July, and no frost in August, excepting once, on, he thought, the 29th, when the thermometer dropped just to freezing point. There was not enough frost to touch vegetation at all in the valley of the river where he was. He noticed when he got out to the Saskatchewan there was rather a high ridge on which there were a lot of half-breed settlers. He got there on September 6, and noticed on top of the hills where they had potatoes that they had been touched just on the tops, but down in the villages the potatoes in the garden of the Hudson Bay post had not been touched at all. He presumed that frost was on August 29.

"The witness had often been over the Canadian Pacific Railway between Lake Nipissing and Port Arthur, and the country he had traversed from the Pas eastwards as compared with the country north of Lake Superior was much superior."[1]

The evidence of Donaldson Bogart Dowling, B.Ap.Sc., of the Geological Survey, is given in the following words: "With reference to the climate, witness did not care to say very much, because he had only been in the country in the summer time, and without having taken records of temperature it would hardly do. The country was in a flourishing condition, and they never expected to have anything frozen. The most northerly point where he had seen vegetable products in Keewatin was on the Nelson River about 56°, which would be 180 miles north[2] of Churchill. At Churchill they had winds from the south-west all summer long, which made it very warm, but there were two days when the wind shifted and came from the north, the people wanted their overcoats at

[1] *The New North-West*, etc., p. 70.
[2] No doubt Mr. Dowling means "south."

once. Then the warm weather returned. It did not freeze, but it was very cold. It was very pleasant in the summer. Sometimes there are very heavy rainfalls, but witness was fortunate in having dry summers. He had a couple of showers. However, it is not a very dry climate." [1]

For sixteen years that potatoes were grown at Fort Albany, on James Bay, by Father F. X. Fafard, O.M.I., for some time Vicar-General of the Bishopric of Keewatin at the Pas, not one failure of crop was recorded.

The following is from the book of Professor Henry Youle Hind, M.A., on the North-West Territory conditions: "The vegetable productions in the gardens attached to Fort à la Corne, with a brief notice of the periods of planting and gathering, will show that the climatic adaptation of the North Branch (of the Saskatchewan) near the Grand Forks is not of a character unfavourable to agricultural operations. . . . On August 7, in the garden attached to Fort à la Corne (about 18 miles below the Grand Forks) potatoes were in flower, and the tubers of early varieties of the size of hen's eggs. Cabbages were well formed. Beet-roots and carrots quite ready for the kitchen. Indian corn in silk, from seed which was grown in the garden last year. Peas ready for gathering.

"In the garden attached to the Nepoween Mission, under the charge of the Rev. Henry Budd (a zealous missionary of native origin), all the vegetables gave promise of fair and remunerative crops. The potatoes were superb; turnips, both swedes and white, remarkably fine; Indian corn, from seed grown on the spot last year, in silk; wheat rather too rank in the stalk—it measured 5 ft. 3 in. in length to the ear, which was well formed but green, and it seemed doubtful that it would ripen. Mr. Budd speaks very favourably of the soil, climate, and extent of land available for agricultural purposes." [2]

I will quote again from the *Hudson Bay Route* of J. A. J. M'Kenna: "Mr. M'Innes gave particular attention to the question of climate, which he rightly considered of vital

[1] *The New North-West*, etc., p. 60. [2] Hind, *op. cit.* p. 34.

importance in connection with this region. He kept a careful record of temperatures, and from the time it was begun on June 19 until the night of September 29, when the thermometer fell to 26°, there was no frost that affected even tender vegetation. On the night of August 10 the temperature fell to the freezing point, but did not get low enough to do damage, at least in the valley of Grassy River, though some of the potato vines on the summit of the high ridge north of the Pas were slightly touched. He was convinced that the district is not at all too cold for general agricultural operations. The longer daily duration of sunlight in these high latitudes must be taken into consideration, and for purposes of comparison with more southerly localities yearly averages of temperature are of no value. A region lying in a higher latitude, though showing a lower yearly average temperature, may during the growing months, owing to its longer hours of sunshine, have quite as good an average. His record showed that during July the temperature at 6 o'clock p.m. was equal to or higher than the noon temperature on fifteen days; during August on nine days, and during September on eight days, and the 6 p.m. averages for these months were lower than the noon averages by only 1°, 1½° and 2°, respectively. For the purpose of comparison, Mr. M'Innes procured from the Director of the Meteorological Service at Toronto an abstract of the past summer's temperatures at Minnedosa, Stony Mountain, Hillview, and Brandon, and comparing them with his record he concluded that the country along the route of the proposed railway to the bay is conspicuously warmer than the same latitude 400 miles further east." [1]

The following is the summary portion of the official report of G. Halcrow, Sr., Observer at the Meteorological Station of the Pas for the year 1913, as published in the pamphlet of the Board of Trade of that town issued in the spring of 1914:

Yearly mean temperature observed at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. 28.1°; yearly mean maximum 40.9°; yearly mean minimum 20.3°; average mean for year of maximum and minimum 30.5°; mean of highest maximum for year 59.0°; mean of

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 25.

lowest minimum for year 1.8°. Rainfall 11.33 inches; snowfall 30.7 inches. Reckoning 10 inches of snow equal to 1 inch rain, total precipitation 14.40 inches. The highest maximum was attained in June with 86.0°, and the lowest minimum in January with 51.0°.[1]

[1] *The Pas, The Gateway to Hudson Bay*, p. 25. See also what Dr. William Sinclair of the Pas had to say on his return from Port Nelson in the fall of 1914, Appendix G.

CHAPTER XIX

THE NATIVE POPULATION

A BOOK on the Hudson Bay route and New Manitoba would hardly be complete without a word about the native population of the territory.

Sir John Richardson writing on the subject in 1851 says:

"From Sault Ste. Marie to the Saskatchewan, and the banks of Churchill River, the native inhabitants term themselves In-nin-yu-wuk or Ey-thinyu-wuk, and are members of a nation which formerly extended southward to the Delaware. That part of this widely spread people which occupies the north side of Lake Huron, the whole border of Lake Superior, and the country between it and the south end of Lake Winnipeg, call themselves Ochipewa, written also Ojibbeway, or Chippeway (Note—They are the Sauteurs or Saulteaux of the Canadians, and Sootoos of the fur traders); and the more northerly division, who name themselves Nathè-wywithinyu, are the Crees of the traders, and Knistenaux of French writers. In a subsequent chapter I shall speak more particularly of the place which this people hold among the aboriginal nations. At present, I wish merely to point out some of the circumstances which have tended to work out a difference in the moral character of these two tribes, essentially the same people in language and manners. The Crees have now for more than twenty-six years been under the undivided control and paternal government of the Hudson's Bay Company, and are wholly dependent on them for ammunition, European clothing, and other things which have become necessaries. No spirituous liquors are distributed to them, and schoolmasters and missionaries are encouraged and aided by the Company to introduce among them the elements of religion and civilisation. One village has been established near the depot at Norway House, and another at the Pas on the

Saskatchewan, each having a church and school-house and a considerable space of cultivated ground. The conduct of the people is quiet and inoffensive; war is unknown in the Cree district; and the Company's officers find little difficulty in hiring the young men as occasional labourers.

" The national name of this people is derived, according to the custom of the Americans, from the word ' man,' which is in different dialects Ethinyu, Ethin-u, Inin-yu, or Ininè. According to Schoolcraft they do not call themselves Unischauba (common light—Schoolcraft) or aborigines, but, on the contrary, have a tradition current among the southern members of the nation, that the country they now hold was previously possessed by the Alligèwi, of whom the name only remains in the appellation of the Alleghani Mountains.

" Among this people there are to be found finer examples of the human figure, handsomer countenances, and a more manly and independent carriage, than among the Eskimos and ' Tinnè '; and West's exclamation on seeing the Apollo Belvidere, that he was a young Mohawk warrior, may be adduced as evidence of the natural grace which a ranger of the woods, unfettered by artificial restraints, may possess. In fact, the attitudes of the Eythinyuwuk are occasionally, and especially when actuated by strong passion, striking, and sometimes elegant; yet the habitual gait of the Red Man is not a graceful one. The toes are turned in; the step, though elastic, has an appearance of insecurity, and is by no means majestic, nor even pleasing, to one unaccustomed to see the centre of gravity thrown so much forward." [1]

The *Handbook of Indians of Canada,* published by the Geographic Board of Canada in 1913, gives the following description:

" Cree (contracted from Kristinaux, French form of Kenistenoag, given as one of their names). An important Algonquin tribe of British America whose former habitat was in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, between Red and Saskatchewan Rivers. They ranged north-eastward down Nelson River, to

[1] *Arctic Searching Expedition,* by Sir John Richardson, C.B., F.R.S., New York, Harper & Bros., 1852, p. 51.

the vicinity of Hudson Bay, and north-westward almost to Athabasca Lake. When they first became known to the Jesuit missionaries a part of them resided in the region of James Bay, as it is stated as early as 1640 that 'they dwell on the rivers of the north sea where Nipissings go to trade with them'; but the Jesuit Relations of 1661 and 1667 indicate a region farther to the north-west as the home of the larger part of the tribe. A portion of the Cree, as appears from the tradition given by Lacombe (*Dict. Lang. Cris*), inhabited for a time the region about Red River, intermingled with the Chippewa and Maskegon, but were attracted to the plains by the buffalo, the Cree, like the Chippewa, being essentially a forest people. Many bands of Cree were virtually nomads, their movements being governed largely by the food supply. The Cree are closely related, linguistically and otherwise, to the Chippewa. Hayden regarded them as an off-shoot of the latter, and the Maskegon another division of the same ethnic group.

"At some comparatively recent time the Assiniboin, a branch of the Sioux, in consequence of a quarrel, broke away from their brethren and sought alliance with the Cree. The latter received them cordially and granted them a home in their territory, thereby forming friendly relations that have continued to the present day. The united tribes attacked and drove south-westward the Sisksika and allied tribes who formerly dwelt along the Saskatchewan. The enmity between these tribes and both the Sisksika and the Sioux has ever since continued. After the Cree obtained firearms they made raids into the Athapascan country, even to the Rocky Mountains and as far north as Mackenzie River. Mackenzie, speaking of the region of Churchill River, says the original people of this area, probably slaves, were driven out by the Cree.

"As the people of this tribe have been friendly from their first intercourse with both the English and the French, and until quite recently were left comparatively undisturbed in the enjoyment of their territory, there has been but little recorded in regard to their history. This consists almost

wholly of their contests with neighbouring tribes and their relations with the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1786, according to Hind, these Indians, as well as those of surrounding tribes, were reduced to less than half their former numbers by smallpox. The same disease again swept off at least half the prairie tribes in 1838. They were thus reduced, according to Hind, to one-sixth or one-eighth of their former population. In more recent years, since game has become scarce, they have lived chiefly in scattered bands, depending largely on trade with the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company. At present they are gathered chiefly in bands on various reserves in Manitoba, mostly with the Chippewa.

" Their dispersion into bands subject to different conditions with regard to the supply and character of their food has resulted in varying physical characteristics; hence the varying descriptions given by explorers. Mackenzie, who describes the Cree comprehensively, says they are of moderate stature, well proportioned, and of great activity. Their complexion is copper-coloured and their hair black, as is common among Indians. Their eyes are black, keen, and penetrating; their countenance open and agreeable. In regard to the women he says: 'Of all the nations which I have seen on this continent, the Knisteneaux women are the most comely. Their figure is generally well proportioned, and the regularity of their features would be acknowledged by the more civilised people of Europe. Their complexion has less of that dark tinge which is common to those savages who have less cleanly habits.' Umfreville, from whom Mackenzie appears to have copied in part what is here stated, says that they are more inclined to be lean of body than otherwise, a corpulent Indian being 'a much greater curiosity than a sober one.' Clark (*Sign Language*, 1885) describes the Cree seen by him as wretchedly poor, and mentally and physically inferior to the Plains Indians; and Harmon says that those of the tribe who inhabit the plains are fairer and more cleanly than the others.

" Their hair was cut in various fashions, according to the tribal divisions, and by some left in its natural state. Henry says the young men shaved off the hair except a small spot

on the crown of the head. Their dress consisted of tight leggings, reaching nearly to the hip, a strip of cloth or leather about 1 foot long passing between the legs and under a belt around the waist, the ends being allowed to hang down in front and behind; a vest or shirt reaching to the hips; sometimes a cap for the head made of a piece of fur or a small skin, and sometimes a robe thrown over the dress. These articles, with moccasins and mittens, constituted their apparel. The dress of the women consisted of the same materials, but the shirt extended to the knees, being fastened over the shoulders with cords and at the waist with a belt, and having a flap at the shoulders; the arms were covered to the wrist with detached sleeves. Umfreville says that in trading, fraud, cunning, Indian finesse, and every concomitant vice was practised by them from the boy of twelve years to the octogenarian, but where trade was not concerned they were scrupulously honest. Mackenzie says that they were naturally mild and affable, as well as just in their dealings among themselves and with strangers; that any deviation from these traits is to be attributed to the influence of the white traders. He also describes them as generous, hospitable, and exceedingly good natured, except when under the influence of spirituous liquor. Chastity was not considered a virtue among them, though infidelity of a wife was sometimes severely punished. Polygamy was common; and when a man's wife died it was considered his duty to marry her sister, if she had one. The arms and utensils used before trade articles were introduced by the whites were pots of stone, arrow-points, spearheads, hatchets, and other edged tools of flint, knives of buffalo rib, fish-hooks made out of sturgeon bones, and awls from bones of the moose. The fibrous roots of the white pine were used as twine for sewing their bark canoes, and a kind of thread from a weed for making nets. Spoons and pans were fashioned from the horns of the moose (Hayden). They sometimes made fish-hooks by inserting a piece of bone obliquely into a stick and sharpening the point. Their lines were either thongs fastened together or braided willow bark. Their skin tipis, like those of the North Athapascans, were raised on

poles set up in conical form, but were usually more commodious. They occasionally erect a larger structure of lattice work, covered with birch bark, in which forty men or more can assemble for council, feasting, or religious rites.

" The dead were usually buried in shallow graves, the body being covered with a pile of stones and earth to protect it from beasts of prey. The grave was lined with branches, some of the articles belonging to the deceased being placed in it, and in some sections a sort of canopy was erected over it. Where the deceased had distinguished himself in war his body was laid, according to Mackenzie, on a kind of scaffolding, but at a later date Hayden says they did not practise tree or scaffold burial. Tattooing was almost universal among the Cree before it was abandoned through the influence of the whites. The women were content with having a line or two drawn from the corners of the mouth towards the angles of the lower jaw; but some of the men covered their bodies with lines and figures. The Cree of the woods are expert canoemen, and the women lighten considerably their labours by the use of the canoe, especially where lakes and rivers abound. A double-head drum and a rattle are used in all religious ceremonies except those which take place in the sweat house. Their religious beliefs are generally similar to those of the Chippewa.

" The gentile form of social organisation appears to be wanting. On account of the uncertain application of the divisional names given by the Jesuit missionaries and other early writers it is impossible to identify them with those more modernly recognised. Richardson says: ' It would, however, be an endless task to attempt to determine the precise people designated by the early French writers. Every small band, naming itself from its hunting grounds, was described as a different nation.' . . . So far as now known the ethnic divisions, aside from the Cree proper, are the Maskegon, and the Monsoni. Although these are treated as distinct tribes, they form, beyond doubt, integral parts of the Cree. It was to the Maskegon, according to Richardson, that the name

Klistenaux, in its many forms, was anciently applied, a conclusion with which Henry apparently agrees." [1]

It is evident that a number of the characteristics and peculiarities given in the above description of the Cree nation do not now apply literally to the present members of this tribe: they, however, furnish a very fair idea of their habits before or where they are not influenced by the ways of civilisation.

Of the Maskegons, the main division of the Cree tribe, and the one which inhabits that portion of Manitoba's new territory along the Hudson Bay Railway, the same blue book has the following information to give out: " Maskegon (Muskigok), ' they of the marshes or swamps.' An Algonquin tribe so closely related to the Cree that they have appropriately been called a subtribe. According to Warren the Maskegon, with the Cree and the Monsoni, form the northern division of the Chippewa group, from which they separated about eight generations before 1850. The traders knew them as Swampy Crees. From the time the Maskegon became known as a distinct tribe until they were placed on reserves by the Canadian Government they were scattered over the swampy region stretching from Lake Winnipeg and Lake of the Woods to Hudson Bay, including the basins of Nelson, Hayes, and Severn Rivers, and extending south to the watershed of Lake Superior. They do not appear to be mentioned in the Jesuit Relations or to have been known to the early missionaries as a distinct people, though the name ' Masquikoukiaks ' in the Proces-verbal of the Prise de Possession of 1761 (Perrot, *Mém.* 293, 1864) may refer to the Maskegon. Tailhan, in his notes to Perrot, gives as doubtful equivalents ' Mikikoueks ou Nikikoueks,' the Otter Nation, a conclusion with which Verwyst (*Missionary Labours*) agrees. Nevertheless their association with the ' Christinos ' (Cree), ' Assinipouals ' (Assiniboin),[2] and all of those inhabiting the countries of the

[1] *Handbook of Indians of Canada*, 1913, published by the Geographical Board of Canada, p. 117 *et seq.*

[2] The only Assiniboin village mentioned in print is Pasquayah, situated where Carrot River enters the Saskatchewan, in Northern Manitoba, Canada. *Ibid.* p. 382.

Squaw and Papoose, Manitoba's New Territory
Photo by The Bishop Charlebois of the Pas.

north and near the sea (Hudson Bay), would seem to justify identifying them with the Maskegon. If so this is their first appearance in history.

"Their gentes probably differ but little from those of the Chippewa. Tanner says that the Pezhew (Besheu) or Wildcat gens is common among them. No reliable estimate can be formed of their numbers, as they have generally had no distinct official recognition. In 1889 there were 1254 Maskegon living with Chippewa on reservations in Manitoba at Birch, Black, Fisher, Berens, and Polar Rivers, Norway House and Cross Lake. The Cumberland band of Saskatchewan and the Shoal Lake, Moose Lake, Chemawawin, and Grand Rapids bands of Manitoba, numbering 621 in 1911, consisted of Maskegon, and they formed the majority of the Pas band, numbering 427, and part of the John Smith and James Smith bands of Duck Lake agency, numbering 392. There were also some under the Manitowpah agency and many among the 1201 Indians of St. Peter reserve in Manitoba." [1]

Whatever the natives of Northern Manitoba may have been before and during the occupation of the country by the white, there is no doubt that they have since made wonderful strides towards progress, and it is with reason that one of their best friends and companions, Dr. John M'Dougall of Calgary, could say before the Canadian Club of Manitoba's metropolis, a few weeks ago: [2] "You and I are the development of countless generations. The Indian has, in one generation, in many cases, risen to the status of a white man." Speaking more particularly of the Northern Indian, he added: "Into that north country where I went as a student of humanity, I came across some of the finest people I have ever met. I remember an Indian missionary by the name of Peter Jacobs saying to me: 'John, you will find at Norway House some of the best men and women you have ever seen.' I was amazed, because I, a student in the public schools, had associated the far north with wilderness and desperate lives, etc. But, sure

[1] *Handbook of Indians of Canada*, 1913, published by the Geographical Board of Canada, p. 276.

[2] This chapter was written in February 1914.

enough, as Peter Jacobs had said, when I came into contact with the Indian peoples of Norway House and Oxford, I found that they were the most chivalrous, the most hospitable, and the kindest, as well as the most obedient men I ever saw."

The writer of this book has himself lived for two years at the Pas, just alongside one of the most important Indian reserves of New Manitoba, the Pas band, mentioned in the passage reproduced from Sir John Richardson's book. He has found them well dressed, well behaved, intelligent, thrifty, quite capable of holding their own against the white men in business and in sport. They have business places of their own, where they trade in all sorts of merchandise, have their own police, their own churches, schools, etc. Their houses are well built, have as good an appearance as those of their white brothers, and in many a case are more tidy than those of many so-called civilised people.

The 1912 report of Agent Fred. Fischer will, in a few lines, give a better idea of the habits and general behaviour of these people than I could in several pages.

" *Pas band.—Tribe or Nation.*—These Indians are of the Swampy Cree tribe.

" *Reserve.*—The reserve is situated on both sides of the Saskatchewan River and at the mouth of the Carrot River as well, in the North-West Territories. In addition the band has a timber berth on the Carrot River and a small fishing station on Clear Water Lake; the whole making a total of 7610 acres. Part of the reserve is covered with small-sized timber. There is also a good deal of swamp-land on which considerable hay could be cut in certain seasons.

" *Population.*—There are 439 souls in this band.

" *Health and Sanitation.*—The health of this band has been fair, the mortality being mostly in the case of young children and can be attributed in a great measure to the disregard of the Indians to advice given as to treatment and sanitary rules. Garbage and refuse is gathered up and burned in the spring.

" *Occupations.*—Many members of this band live by hunting fur-bearing animals, others work on York boats, surveys, and as canoemen, and at general employment with the dif-

ferent traders, for which they are paid good wages. The fur hunt has been good and the prices paid were also good. Moose have been killed when required. Fishing has been greatly neglected for the fur hunt, but those living on the reserve have managed to catch sufficient for their needs.

"*Buildings.*—The buildings on this reserve are fair; many houses are built of lumber and others of logs, and for the most part have shingle roofs. The saw-mills did but little work last summer. The stables are log buildings, small, and of poor construction.

"*Stock.*—The cattle have wintered well with sufficient fodder.

"*Characteristics and Progress.*—The Indians of this band are law-abiding, and have made a good living owing to the high prices paid for furs, but this is entirely dependent on success or otherwise of the fur hunt, they are so proverbially improvident that if it happens to be a bad season, their living is of a poor quality.

"*Temperance and Morality.*—So far the Indians of this band have been temperate and their morals fair, but I am afraid that their proximity to the town will not tend to improve them."[1]

What Mr. Fischer has written of the Pas Indians may be said of all the other tribes throughout the new territory of Manitoba, with very few and slight differences.

S. J. Jackson, Inspector of Indian Agencies, in the same report passes the following remarks:

"Nearly all the Indians of this agency are of the tribe known as Wood Crees, and there is a considerable mixture of white blood. They are of a good type and compare favourably with the half-breed population of Manitoba, both in morals and as workers. Nine-tenths of them belong to the Church of England, the remainder being Roman Catholics and pagan, very few of the latter. The English Church people in this agency are looked after by Bishop Newnham, of Prince Albert, and he has a clergyman or lay-reader on

[1] *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the year ended March* 31, 1912, p. 107.

every reserve. We may expect in the near future that the Roman Catholic Church will do its full share of looking after the spiritual wants of the Indians in this agency, as during the summer that Church was preparing an establishment for a bishop in Le Pas town." [1]

It may be noted here that the whole of the original townsite of the Pas has been carved out of part of the Pas band's reserve, and that the members draw from this source yearly a substantial revenue represented by the interest on the capital invested.

A very substantial boarding-school costing $75,000 has been erected recently at Big Eddy, a few miles up the river from the Pas.

A feature of the public meeting held on February 16, 1912, at the Pas, to hear Premier Roblin, was the address which had been prepared in the Cree language by Chief Antoine Constant, and read from the English translation. It was as follows:

"Honourable Sir,—It is gratifying for me to have the distinguished honour of extending to you and your party the hearty welcome of my tribe, along with that of the residents of Le Pas. I trust this visit may be one to be followed by many other such visits. I trust that the after-visits may be titled: Our Premier's visits. There shall be many important questions, no doubt, which shall be brought to your notice, questions affecting the laws and ordinances of the North-West Territories. We are aware that you wish to meet the demands and needs of the Indian hunter and traveller, and the voyageur, with which class chiefly this northern country is inhabited. One question which is of vital importance to the Indian is the law governing the game and Nature's products of the country. I, therefore, as chief, come forward and lay before your house

[1] *Annual Report of The Department of Indian Affairs for the year ended March* 31, 1912, p. 117. To whoever wishes to familiarise himself with what the Roman Catholic Church has accomplished in the Hudson Bay country I recommend the reading of Mgr. Ovide Charlebois's booklet telling of his first pastoral visits to the Indian missions. It will be sent post paid to persons who will send 25 cents to the Bishop's palace at the Pas. It has been published for the benefit of the Roman Catholic missions in Keewatin.

a plea of leniency, even as was seen necessary by the Dominion Government, so that the Indian may be able to continue to live independent of government gratuities."

The result of this business-like letter, as Premier Roblin was pleased to call it, was the exception which was made in favour of the new territory in the Game Act, for the periods to shoot certain game which the Indian is accustomed to hunt to supply himself with food.

CHAPTER XX

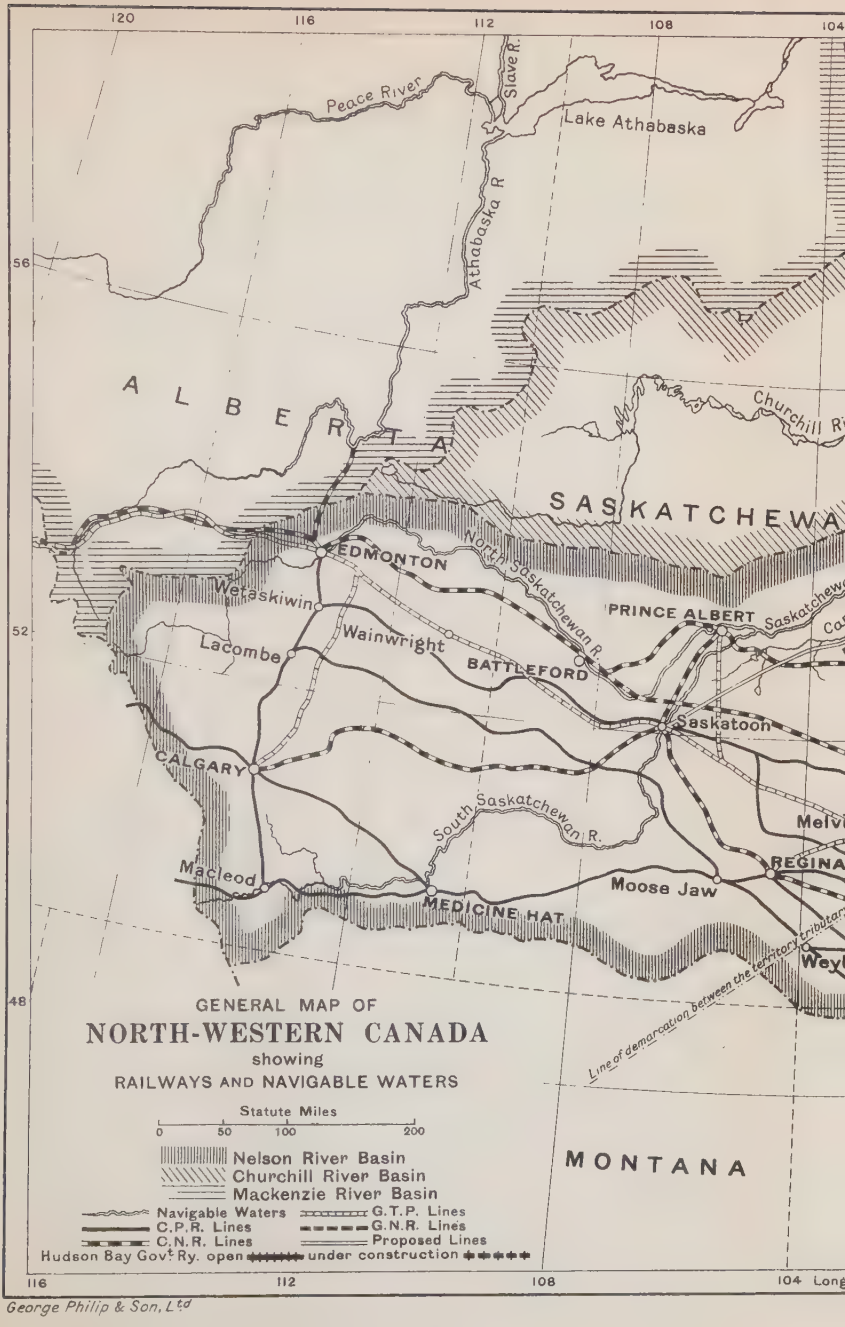
THE NORTHERN METROPOLIS [1]

" It is my opinion that in a very short time the tide of emigration will flow towards those parts when a Province will probably be formed with Pas Mission for its capital."—*Six Years in Canadian North-West*, by Joan d'Artigue, Toronto, 1882, p. 166.

BECAUSE of its position as south terminus of the Hudson Bay Railway, the Pas, the largest centre of population in New Manitoba, has, in less than four years, attained a world-wide fame, and much speculation is entertained as to its future. Before dealing with the features which, in the opinion of many, are destined to make of this point one of the chief western cities, it will no doubt interest the reader to know something of its past history.

In a preceding chapter it has been related how Chevalier de Lavérendrye, in the fall of 1741, had ascended the River Saskatchewan to the Forks. By these Forks some authors have understood the junction of the two Saskatchewans: this is undoubtedly an error, as it is further learned that at these Forks the Chevalier established a fort which he named " Fort Poskoyac." By referring to a map of Canada and the north part of Louisiana published in 1762 by Thomas Jefferys in London, near Charing Cross, at the end of his book, *Voyages from Asia to America*, Poskoyac (Indian village) appears at the present location of the Pas, at the junction point of the Saskatchewan and Pas Rivers. On a map of 1776, Bonne calls the place Poscoyac (Indian Village), and in 1778 Thos. Bowen shows it as Indian Village. Lavérendrye himself, on a map dating as far back as 1750, gives the name of Poskaiao

[1] A visitor to the Pas in July 1912, Robert Shields, the well-known author of *My Travels*, gave to one of the town's citizens the following bit of advice: " Do not let your opportunity pass. Follow the example set you by other western cities: know the right moment when to profit by the chance which is offered you of taking your place among the world's centres. You have that chance now—grasp it. It should be easy for you to surpass anything which has been done in city building in the past, being given the natural advantages you have which are lacking to other points."



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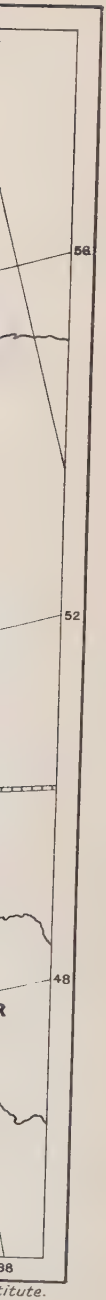

titute.

to the Saskatchewan River, while on another, a few years later, he calls it Bascoia. When Hendry made his trip from York Factory to Southern Alberta in 1754-55, he spoke of Basquia as a French fort on the Saskatchewan River, and he stated that the Indians called it also Baqua. There can be no doubt that all these names, which are so much similar, varying only in form on account of the native pronunciation, stand for one and the same place, the Pas of to-day, at the forks of the Saskatchewan River and the Pas or Pasquia River.

This is further confirmed by Alexander Henry the elder, who writes: "On the first October (1775) we gained the mouth of the river de Bourbon, Pasquayah or Saskatchewaine, (the lower part of the Saskatchewaine was once called the river de Bourbon, Pasquayah is the name of an upper portion of the Saskatchewaine) and proceeded to ascend its stream." Then a little farther down: "At 80 leagues above Fort de Bourbon (Cedar Lake) at the head of a stream which falls into the Saskatchewaine, and into which we had turned, we found the Pasquayah village." [1]

In Pierre Margry's short memorandum of the map which represents the establishments and discoveries made by

[1] *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, between the years 1760 and 1776*, by Alexander Henry, Fur Trader, edited by James Bain, chief librarian, Toronto Public Library, George N. Morang & Co., Ltd., Toronto, 1901, p. 255. In a note to the passage quoted above I find the following opinion on the etymology of the name of the Saskatchewan River, which, I may say, is also the one generally given by those persons familiar with the Cree language: "The name is derived from Kis-is-kat-ji-wan, the Cree word for 'swift flowing,' and has been tortured into many forms by early travellers." The same note refers to the etymology of Pasquayah, but there I find Mr. Bain at variance with the native linguists: "Pasquayah is derived from Paskquaw, a prairie or desert, as its course is through the great plain, to the east of the Rocky Mountains. The Cree name was long confined to the upper portion of the river (this part is no doubt historically correct), but is now transferred, though altered in spelling to Pasquia, to a tributary which enters the Saskatchewan from the right near the Pas Mission, 85 miles from Lake Winnipeg." Pasquia, that many want to give as the root of Pas, is probably a contraction of part of Wapuskeowatchi (*wapus*, strait; *ke-ow*, woods; *watchi*, hill: a pass through woods on a hill), the name by which Sir John Richardson in 1848 heard the natives call the Pas Mountains, near which the Pas River is found flowing northward.

Lavérendrye and his sons, we read: " From Fort Bourbon to the river Poskoyak is thirty leagues. There is a fort at the head of this river which is abandoned because of lack of supplies for the winter."

This should be more than sufficient to show that the Pas is the Fort Poskoyac of Lavérendrye and therefore dates as far back as 1741.

During the whole of the French régime it was the main fort of Lavérendrye's western posts: in 1750 Joseph Claude Boucher de Niverville, ninth son of Pierre Boucher de Grosbois, ex-Governor of Three Rivers, was stationed at " Rivière Poskoyac," and from there on May 29, 1751, sent ten men to establish Fort la Jonquière (Calgary). It is believed that he died at the Pas. In 1754 the Chevalier St. Luc de la Corne was also at the Pas, and it was during his stay there that he explored the Carrot River Valley and cultivated the first field of grain in Western Canada, thereby deserving to be called its first agriculturist.

After the cession of Canada to England the French naturally withdrew from their establishments in the west, and for almost half a century only the Assiniboine Indians continued to live at their little village. Of one of their chiefs, Chatique, a somewhat humorous story is related by Alexander Henry the elder at the time of his passage at the Pas on October 1, 1775.[1]

With these Indians " Louis Primo," " Old François " and a number of French-Canadian traders continued to transact business on their trips up and down the Saskatchewan, interfering to such an extent with the " rights " of the Hudson's Bay Company, in partnership with or independent altogether of " the Pedlars," as the English would call the vanguard of the future North-West Company, that Samuel Hearne was sent in 1772 from Fort Churchill to build a competing fort at " Basquia." This he erected instead at Cumberland House, leaving the Indian village site to the " Nor'-Westers," who made it their base of supplies in common with their fort on Cedar Lake, as the French had done from the time of the discovery of the Saskatchewan.

[1] This episode will be found in Henry's own words in Appendix H.

CUMBERLAND HOUSE

From a picture taken in 1911.

The whole of the traffic entering from the east, the immense fur field extending to the Pacific in the west, the Arctic Ocean in the north, and Hudson Bay in the north-east, in those days passed through the Pas. The geographical position of the little place in this respect struck one of the French-Canadian guides of the Montreal Scotch Merchants: about 1800, Joseph Constant, who, it is believed, in common with the greater number of the voyageurs in those days, originated from Three Rivers and had married a Sauteux woman in his peregrinations throughout the land, made up his mind to settle with the Assiniboines at the junction of the Saskatchewan and Pas Rivers and try his hand at grain growing and cattle raising, for the purpose, no doubt, of supplying flour and meat to the fur traders of the immense country, at the entrance of which he found himself. That he met with considerable success there is little doubt, for when, twenty years later, the unfortunate Captain Sir John Franklin went through the Pas, to which he gives the name of Basquiau River, he noticed cultivation in progress, and this was still being kept up in 1833 at the time that Sir John Richardson, Dr. Richard King, and Lieutenant-Colonel John Henry Lefroy visited the district. In all probability, in those days, Joseph Constant was being helped in his worthy attempt by the two sons and four daughters that his Sauteux wife had given him, and their children.

That the Hudson's Bay Company, which by that time had become all-powerful, encouraged very little the efforts of Constant and his offspring, in its desire that it should retain the country solely for fur trade purposes, is evidenced by the facts which will now be placed before the reader.[1]

[1] It may be added here that Sir George Simpson, while occupying the position of Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, was strongly reprimanded for having written a report favourable to the settlement of the country in which he made mention of the untold wealth along agricultural, timber, mineral, and other lines of natural resources. He was ordered to either retract the statements he had so made, or to resign. Hence we find him testifying before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1857 in the following manner: "I do not think that any part of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories is well adapted for settlement." (Questions 716 and 719.) Let those who may wonder at this evident desire of the Hudson's Bay Company to withhold all knowledge of the resources of the country from the public

Lieutenant-Colonel Lefroy, Sir John Richardson, and Dr. King were extensively questioned as to these facts by the Select Committee of the British House of Commons in 1857, with the Right Honourable Henry Labouchère in the chair. The committee had been appointed to consider the state of British possessions in North America, and ascertain whether certain portions were susceptible of being cultivated. With the Red River settlement, strange as it may seem, the Pas and Cumberland House appear to have been the only points where attempts at agriculture worth mentioning had been noticed by the persons examined. Now that Western Canada has become the recognised granary of the world, with Winnipeg the largest grain market of the American continent, it is rather interesting to note the conclusions arrived at by the different witnesses.[1]

Lieutenant-Colonel Lefroy was examined February 23, 1857. He had resided eleven years in North America and passed nearly two years in the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company, making magnetical observations for the Royal Society. He had visited almost the entire region; every place of any consequence on the east side of the Rocky Mountains. In his opinion, agricultural settlement could make but very slender progress in any portion of that region; although the Red River settlement was pretty well adapted for agricultural purposes, it did not bear comparison with the best parts of the British American colonies, and at all events, formed but a

try to find another explanation for the following which I have obtained from an ex-missionary on Hudson Bay: "Not many years ago, since the advent of the railway in the west, and the establishment of flour mills at Lake of the Woods and other western points, possibly to this day flour would be shipped from Winnipeg to England via Montreal, re-shipped from England to Hudson Bay, and hauled and portaged on rivers and over cataracts to points only a short distance from where it had been originally procured, and where it could have been easily transported by lake and river. And for what reason? No doubt to prevent the people depending on the Company for the supply of food-stuff in return for their furs to discover that there was somewhere near them a country where they could deal with competitors of the Company."

[1] What follows is quoted almost verbatim from the Hudson's Bay Papers, Select Committee. For opinion of the press, etc., on this inquiry, see Appendix E.

small proportion of the whole region. He believed the best agricultural country he had seen was between Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods. The nature of the soil on a very large portion of the region was primitive in geological formation, being almost denuded of soil. The frosts were so intense, that over a very large portion the soil was permanently frozen. The seasons were so short and so uncertain, that crops were liable to be cut off by unseasonable frosts at periods that made it almost impossible for the husbandmen to reckon with any certainty on a return.[1]

He had been once up and once down the Saskatchewan River. There was undoubtedly land in that district susceptible of cultivation and fit for settlement; in fact it was along that district a little to the north and south of it that the agricultural land was to be found. Cultivation had actually been tried with some success at Fort Cumberland; wheat had grown there, with uncertainty however, from the causes alluded to, but still sufficiently to add greatly to the comforts of the residents of the district. Although the settlement at Fort Cumberland was not made for any purpose of colonisation, but simply as a trading post, there was a small attempt at settlement on a spot immediately adjoining called on the maps the Basquiau River, but commonly called in the country the Pas; a country of civilised or Christianised Indians had been formed for the last ten or twelve years, and they had succeeded, in some degree, in cultivating the ground. They grew wheat, barley, potatoes, and various vegetables. They did not grow Indian corn:[2] he did not believe it would ripen, except by matter of accident, in that region. He was inclined to think

[1] Another gentleman who was examined, the Rt. Hon. E. Ellice, M.P., had the following to say: "I have heard that evidence has been given to this committee that the Saskatchewan is a country capable of settlement: that may be when a second generation from this are in their graves, but it will only be because the population of America becomes so dense that they are forced into situations less fit for settlement than those which they occupy now." (Question 5847.)

[2] As a matter of fact Indian corn matures very well at the Pas. A year after this testimony was given Henry Youle Hind wrote about Rev. Mr. Budd's garden: "Indian corn, from seed grown on the spot last year, in silk." (See *supra*, page 177.)

that wheat was not a crop that could be depended upon, but wished it understood that he was not speaking with much confidence. Potatoes could be depended upon. He never heard that they had any disease. In all instances in which these crops grew the returns were exceedingly small.[1] They would ripen, but the crop would not be in the same proportion as in more genial countries. He had never heard of oats being grown, but they would no doubt grow. The winter would last between October and April, both inclusive, and he had not noticed any amelioration of climate.

There was always a class of adventurers who would push to the most remote region wherever it was, but if they were acquainted with the relative advantages of the country between the Rainy Lake and the Lake of the Woods, which he thought was the most favourable part for cultivation, and the unsettled lands of Canada then open, he did not think they would choose the former. He believed it was a remarkable fact that wherever limestone existed, cultivation was possible.[2]

Sir John Richardson was examined on March 9, 1857. Of all the lower part of the Saskatchewan River below Cumberland House, in his opinion, there were only two or three points which would maintain a family of farmers; there was no place which he saw that would maintain a colony of any size. Three or four farmers might occupy the whole of the points that were productive. Mr. Leith,[3] who had left a sum of £10,000 for the benefit of the natives of that district, and who wished to collect them into a village, found only one spot which was available for

[1] Compare this with the evidence of William M'Innes, M.A., of the Geographical Survey, before the Select Committee of the Canadian Senate, 1906–7: "Witness saw potatoes that were grown about 50 miles north of the Pas. There were quite showy potatoes, great large fellows like those you see exhibited in fairs—tremendously large, grown on practically new land, and they had a very large crop of them." *The New North-West*, p. 67.

[2] Limestone abounds in New Manitoba along the Hudson Bay Railway.

[3] Chief factor James Leith. According to Rev. Geo. Bryce, *MacKenzie, Selkirk, Simpson*, page 224, the amount left by Mr. Leith was £12,000. His relatives opposed the bequest but the courts upheld it. To this day the Bishopric of Rupert's Land receives an annuity of £400 from this source.

that purpose. It was at the Pas, some distance below Fort Cumberland, but the whole of that country about the Pas was intersected by lakes, and in the spring and a great part of the summer it was under water; it was very level, although the limestone came near the surface, the country was easily flooded. You might travel almost in any direction, as far as your view extended, with canoes, the spring floods leaving only a few elevated alluvial points, upon which the Indians had built their huts.

Here, it might be noted that the conditions of which Sir John Richardson speaks are far from being frequent, although it is true to say that the water is very abundant in the Pas district.[1] Dr. Richard King, whose examination we are on the point to read, a few years before had written: "So great a deposit of mud and sand has taken place within the last few years (at Cumberland House) that the fort is not only unapproachable for nearly a mile in boats and canoes, but a small river which formerly discharged itself into the lake has been filled up. The various changes which are taking place in the relative proportions of land and water are here so rapid and constant that they may be observed at almost every step as a proof of the gaining of the land. In addition to Cumberland House, there is the Cedar Lake, the whole of which, from the immense quantity of detritus or alluvion annually brought down by the Saskatchewan, must in process of time be converted into a forest."[2]

Dr. Richard King, M.D., was examined on June 15, 1857. In going through the Hudson's Bay Territory, his position had been that of a naturalist; he had come away certainly with the impression that it was a very magnificent country in many parts of it; of course there were barren portions,

[1] At what was to be Winnipeg, in 1826, such a flood occurred that the settlers had to flee to the nearest hills. The water in the Red River and the Assiniboine River rose 40 feet above its normal summer level. Cf. *Histoire de l'Ouest Canadien de* 1822 *à* 1869, par l'abbé G. Dugas, p. 44.

[2] *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Arctic Ocean in* 1833, 1834 *and* 1835 *under the command of Captain Back, R.N.*, by Richard King, M.R.C.S., etc., surgeon and naturalist to the expedition, p. 53 *et seq.*

but upon the whole, up to the Athabasca Lake, it had appeared to him to be capable of any extent of cultivation. Governor Williams had opened Cumberland House; he (King) had found implements in the field and capacious barns; it evidently had been placed under culture; and he had been told at the time that Governor Williams had been ordered away for his partiality in this respect. He had never heard that the agricultural operations had failed, and that the barns had been built in anticipation and consequently had not been used. On approaching Cumberland House, he had found a little colony established of about thirty persons: a Canadian, an Englishman, and half-breeds; they had their fields divided out into farms, and other things. It had been described to him by his men that there was a little colony there. He had bought a calf of them; he had given 7*s.* for it; a fat bullock would sell for 12*s.* It had appeared to him in going over their farms that they were very highly cultivated; there were corn, wheat, and barley growing. They had told him at the time that they were ordered off, that the Company would not allow them to go on cultivating; that it was against the Company, and that therefore the thing was to be broken up. He did not know whether it had been broken or not. He did not return by that route,[1] otherwise he should have ascertained that fact.

Then he had gone to Cumberland House, and there had found that they were really borne out in what they had stated, for he had found that the barns and the implements were in the field, and that the cows and the oxen and the horses and everything had gone wild. He had inquired the reason of it; they had told him that Governor Williams had a penchant for farming, and that the Company had ordered him off somewhere else; that was what he had been told.

He had always understood that Governor Williams had done this farming and that it had been very much against the approbation of the Company; that he had got hauled

[1] The witness gets evidently confused. According to his own book he returned by the same route, and it was then that the members of the little colony complained about the threat of the order to move away. King, *op. cit.* p. 219.

over the coals and had been ordered off; that was what he had been told at the time. It had appeared to him to be the truth. The person in charge of Cumberland House had told him; the whole of his party of seventeen men had heard the same thing.

At that time Mr. Leith was in Canada: his bequest for the maintenance of cultivation at Cumberland had been after the witness's time. He (King) had found that the cultivation had been abandoned at that time, and on inquiry he had found that it had been by order of the Company that it had been abandoned. He did not know whether the cultivation had been on the part of the Company. He had always understood that Governor Williams had done it himself. He (Williams) had been there in Sir John Franklin's time. There were a trading post and a settlement there at that time. He had been told that it was not because it was not profitable that the cultivation had been given up by those who had been undertaking it.

One of these little colonists had come to him, and thought that he was a government officer, and could interfere, and he (King) had said that he had no power to prevent the Company from driving them away from their farms, which they had been cultivating for some years. There were about thirty of these farms in number; he should say there were 1500 or 2000 acres under cultivation on the approach to Cumberland House. He had been a sportsman from a boy of about four or five years of age; he had been over a good many acres; he would not bind himself down to the quantity: it might have been 1000, 1500, or 2000 acres; they were small fields; they were not large parcels of fields; they extended perhaps to from three to four acres in each field. He could not tell whether the cultivation was continuous; he had merely landed there for the purpose of getting some provision and had bought a calf, for which he had paid 7*s.*: that was all he knew; they had come and pleaded with him.

So far from his being informed that the cultivation had been prosecuted by the Company and become profitless, and had been consequently abandoned, he had understood that

it was private enterprise, and that it had been prosecuted with very great success to his own positive knowledge, from having seen the crop growing, and that a complaint was made on the part of those persons who were so engaged in agriculture, that they had orders to quit, and to cease to cultivate the land. They had also said: "When you get to Cumberland House you will have the evidence there that Governor Williams was ordered to withdraw." Everything had the sign of it, as these colonists had told him: there was the evidence that a sudden termination had taken place to the agricultural pursuits there. Cultivation did exist there to a very considerable extent. He had concluded that it was entirely owing to an objection to colonisation of the country that it had been abandoned. There were a Canadian, an Englishman, and half-breeds at the little colony. He could not tell the names, as he could not recollect them. If they would allow him to refer to his book he dared say he could give them to them. They would find the entire account there, which had been published in 1836. (At this point Dr. King handed the first volume of his book to one of the members of the committee.)[1]

[1] As a matter of fact, King's narrative in his book does not contain much new information and no names. At page 52 one reads: "From scenes connected with such melancholy events (Frobisher's Point) our attention was soon after diverted by the cheerful prospect of houses surrounded by a quantity of land in a highly-cultivated state, divided into fields of growing corn and rich meadows. Several horses and oxen were grazing round about, and pigs and fowls were distributed in every direction. The settlement consisted of two farms belonging to a Canadian and an Englishman, who were endeavouring to gain a subsistence by bartering for furs with the Indians and selling their cattle, flour and butter to any of the company's men who might be disposed to become purchasers. A fat bullock sold for twelve or fourteen shillings, and flour and butter for a mere trifle. June 30th we left the little colony, for, including wives and children, many of whom had married to Indians or half-breeds, they were in number about thirty; and on the following day we arrived at Cumberland House." Then at page 54: "The horses were becoming wild, the oxen occasional truants, the cows, although they went 'to the milk-pail' twice a day, gave by no means a very clean quantity of that sober and nutritious beverage; and a solitary hog stood every chance of dying without issue." In volume ii. page 219 (on the return trip): "The inhabitants of the little colony on the banks of the Saskatchewan River were also affected with a mild form of the disease (influenza) which, however, was not the

He was quite satisfied that there had been at least 1000 acres under cultivation. The cultivation was quite successful, the wheat was looking luxuriant. There were also potatoes, barley, pigs, cows, and horses. He did not know in what latitude it was: he had always restricted himself to climate. He would suppose that it was a degree and a half north of Montreal: about 90° (*sic*) of north latitude. This new colony was within 30 or 40 miles in a direct line from Cumberland House.

At this point a member of the committee read to the witness the following passage from his book: "The ground about the house is not only excellent, but fit for immediate culture. The house (it is in the singular number) a few years ago was in most excellent repair and exhibited a very productive farm, the effect of the continued care and attention of Governor Williams, who had a great partiality for agricultural pursuits. A vast change, however, had taken place at the time of their arrival. The house was all but falling to pieces; the implements of tillage and the capacious barns were silent monuments of waste." He could not say whose property those implements of tillage and the capacious barns had been: he had never asked that; they were not the property of the small colonists, who, he would ask the committee, should be cut off entirely from the house. It was attributed by the parties there to Governor Williams in the representation which was made to him, that he had done it of his own will, but with what resources he could not say. The same state was not exhibited in the little colony when he came to it: it was only in the beginning; that was a most flourishing affair. The little colonists had complained of agriculture having been ordained to cease, on the spot; they had appealed to him as a government officer, thinking that he could relieve them, on

only source of trouble to them: they had been threatened by the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company with an order for their immediate removal, supposing the traffic they carried on with the Indians injurious to the trade at Cumberland House; I am, however, unwilling to believe the report; or if such an act of injustice should be put in practice, I do hope it will not be countenanced by the leading members of that company."

their own little colony. He could not explain how it was that the little colony was in a most flourishing state, although they had been ordered off. He could only say that he had found this little colony of fields in the highest possible state of cultivation; that he had bought a calf of them; and, when he was going away, that they had said: "Cannot you help us? You are a government officer; the Company have ordered us to quit, and we shall be ruined." He did not know whether they did quit. The whole farm of Governor Williams, which was the most extensive affair, he believed, was about a day's march. The 1000 acres were all together, they were divided into separate fields, and each man had his particular allotment in the little colony, which at the time he was there was unquestionably flourishing. He had not the slightest idea that that colony had been ruined.

To preserve to the statement of Dr. King all its piquancy, it has been reported here verbatim, the only change being from the form by questions and answers to that of a narrative.[1]

That the little colony was at the Pas is verified by the previous depositions of Lieutenant-Colonel Lefroy and Sir John Richardson, as well as by the following item from John M'Lean's notes: "We arrived on the 5th of August (1833)

[1] To those who may marvel at the complete difference of opinion evidently expressed in the deposition of Dr. King from those of Colonel Lefroy and Sir John Richardson, it may be pointed out that the all-powerful Hudson's Bay Company had no doubt circumvented the other witnesses in some manner, while Dr. King had resisted. This witness remembered that when he had attempted to organise an expedition to search for the unfortunate Captain Franklin, on his return in 1835, he had met with strenuous opposition on the part of both the British Government and the Hudson's Bay Company. He was therefore no friend of the latter. The years which have gone by since he so courageously gave his evidence all in favour of the adaptability of the North-West Territory to settlement have proved that he was speaking the truth. This does not prevent the impudent autocratic Company from audaciously publishing such things as the following in our days, referring to their own employees: "A story too lengthy to print here would be that in which we might recount the virile deeds ashore and amain of these picturesquely costumed, indomitable spirits, in their efforts to abet the footsteps of progress and civilisation, in primeval Canada—then a 'collection of huts,'—and to build an empire for the sovereign power across the sea."—*The Panama Canal*, p. 7.

at Rivière du Pas, where an old Canadian, M. Constant, had fixed his abode, who appeared to have an abundance of the necessaries of life and a large family of half-Indians, who seemed to claim him as their sire." [1] This at the same time confirms the fact that the Canadian mentioned by Dr. King was, if not Joseph Constant, who had settled on the point at the Pas about 1800, probably his son Antoine, the father of the present chief of the Pas Indians, Antoine Constant, from whom I obtained this information, as also that the first Antoine married a Cree woman, of whom he had five boys and four daughters, while he himself married a Cree woman, who bore him three sons and six daughters.

Apparently the orders of the Company that the little colonists should remove were not, entirely at least, carried out, as on August 17, 1858, Professor Henry Youle Hind, on his arrival at the Pas "situate at the confluence of the Saskatchewan and Basquia River," speaks of the impression of "getting back to civilisation after all our wayfaring, when, on rounding one of the majestic sweeps of the river, the pretty white church" (to which he has previously referred as Christ Church, a neat and rather imposing edifice), "surrounded by farmhouses and fields of waving grain, burst unexpectedly upon our view." [2] Very little, if any, grain cultivation is done now at the Pas, except by a few white farmers on a rather experimental basis along the Pas River. It seems reasonable to surmise that the 1000 to 2000 acres of cultivated land in the days of Dr. King were across the Pas River in the beautiful plain extending between this river and the Carrot River along the Saskatchewan, where natural hay is now cut year after year on the lands belonging partly to the Hudson's Bay Company, the Church of England, and the Pas Indians.

Christ Church, which has just been mentioned in the quotation of Dr. Hind, was erected in the winter of 1847–48 by Rev. J. Hunter, who had arrived at the Pas in 1844 to

[1] *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson Bay Territory*, by John M'Lean (London, Richard Bentley, 1849).
[2] Hind, *op. cit.* p. 75.

succeed Rev. Henry Budd, the native catechist of the C.M.S., who had established the first Anglican Mission in 1840. While to the modern visitor the present Church of England is often shown as containing relics of the unfortunate Franklin expedition, it must be said that these relics have a rather remote bearing on the sad fate of the illustrious navigator, except correlatively.

On March 16, 1848, instructions were issued by the Admiralty to Sir John Richardson, M.D., to proceed on an overland expedition in search of the ships *Erebus* and *Terror* by which Sir John Franklin had sailed from England on May 19, 1845, not to be seen again, except on July 26, 1846, in latitude 74° 48′ N., longitude 66° 13′ W., moored to an iceberg, and waiting for an opportunity of crossing to Lancaster Sound, 220 miles away. From the port of landing, New York, Sir John Richardson was to follow the usual canoe route by Montreal, Fort William, Rainy Lake, the Lake of the Woods, Lake Winnipeg, and the Saskatchewan River, and to overtake the boats, under charge of Mr. John Bell, chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company, who, in view of the proposed expedition, had been sent from Norway House with provisions in the fall of 1847. It is here that the Christ Church incident took place. Mr. Bell's party was overtaken by winter in Cedar Lake: the boats were housed, a store-room was constructed, and a number of the men and such women and children as were unable to travel over the snow were left in charge. The bulk of the stranded party set out for Cumberland House, from which a fishery was established at Beaver Lake to keep up the stock of supplies as much as possible.

Among Mr. Bell's men at Cumberland House was a carpenter named Mackay [1] who, while his companions busied themselves with " the several winter employments of cutting firewood, driving sledges with meat or fish, and such like occupations," [2] volunteered to help Rev. Mr. Hunter, who for some time had been making preparations to erect a church on a site that he had chosen for it, " on the bank of the river

[1] Richardson, *op. cit.* p. 280. [2] Richardson, *op. cit.* p. 38.

Interior of Christ Church at the Pas
Showing furniture built by the Rev. Hunter's carpenters, winter of 1847-8

opposite to his own house."[1] "The Indians had been willing to help, and contributed labour and materials to a considerable amount; but, although they had learnt enough of carpenter's work to build their own log-houses, there was no one competent to undertake the erection of so large a building as a church. Mr. Hunter devoted much thought and time and labour to the subject, but all would have been of no avail had it not been for one of those providential circumstances, which so often occur, but which we are so slow to acknowledge.

"Some of the English sailors attached to Sir John Richardson's last and, alas! fruitless expedition, had been sent forward to be in readiness to start with him, and were, during the winter of 1847-48, located at Cumberland Fort, a day and a half's distance from the Pas. One of the men was a carpenter, and he readily and kindly gave Mr. Hunter all the assistance in his power while he remained in the neighbourhood. The church progressed considerably under his directions, and when he went away, Mr. Hunter was able to procure another carpenter from Norway House.

"At last the church was completed. It stands in a neatly-fenced burying-ground, and is surrounded by several Indian dwellings; the parsonage stands among cottages on the opposite bank, and the whole is striking and picturesque."[2]

Christ Church was consecrated by Bishop Anderson, first Bishop of Rupert's Land, in the course of his first pastoral visit to the Pas in June 1850.

[1] *The Rainbow in the North*, by S. Tucker (London, Nisbet, 1851), p. 191. Those of my readers who are familiar with the natural features at the Pas will possibly imagine from this that Mr. Hunter's house was across the Saskatchewan River, where the Indian village is to be found to-day, on the north bank. It was not so, however. Until a relatively recent period, Mission Island was connected with the mainland above the mouth of the Pas River, and the "slough" between the island and the English and Roman Catholic Missions of our days was the channel of that little river, which, however, little by little, cut another channel for itself west of the present "island" and gradually abandoned the old one. Until two or three decades ago the "slough" was full of the water of the Pas River flowing into the Saskatchewan by two channels. Christ Church was therefore "on the bank of the (Pas) river opposite" to the missionary's house on Mission Island.

[2] Tucker, *op. cit.* p. 191.

That Mackay and his successor [1] were very good carpenters is evidenced to this day by the pews, font, pulpit, reading-desk, and other furniture still in existence in the new Christ's Church erected in 1895 by Rev. John Hines, and in the presbytery on Mission Island, where the sundial given to the mission by Colonel Lefroy may also be seen.

The same year as Rev. Mr. Budd established the first Anglican mission at the Pas, known successively as Cumberland-Pas, Devon, and Pas Mission, the Hudson's Bay Company established a branch of their Cumberland House post on the point between the Saskatchewan and Pas Rivers, which they had previously bought from Chief Constant. About 1895 a Post Office was established which was called The Pas. With the advent of the Canadian Northern Railway in 1908, who named their station Le Pas, the Postmaster-General also decided in the spring of 1911 to adopt this form: the two names are now official. The town has received its incorporation under the name of The Pas. Both forms are used in official documents: the Geographical Board of Canada employs the form Pas. It seems impossible to state in a certain manner how and when the name originated. All sorts of fanciful explanations have been given, none of which, outside of the French etymology, have the least appearance of genuineness. In my mind, the best explanation [2] which has been given for the adoption of the name " The Pas " is that, being composed of an English word and a French word, both containing the same number of letters, it represents the *Entente cordiale* existing between the governments of Great Britain and France [3] which has culminated in the holy and powerful alliance destined to destroy militarism *à outrance* in Europe.

[1] Some call him James M'Laren, while they give to Mackay the Christian name of Robert. Strange enough, Sir John Richardson says nothing of the building of Christ Church, although he mentions the Pas Mountains, which he says the Indians call Wapuskeowatchi and the Canadians Basquiau (*op. cit.* p. 50). Mackay is mentioned at page 280 among the sappers and miners as a carpenter by trade who was employed with another carpenter, named Brodie, to make tables and chairs at Fort Confidence.

[2] Given by Rex. G. White, staff correspondent to the *Minneapolis Daily News*, fall of 1912.

[3] For article on name of town published in the *Manitoba Free Press* in the summer of 1913, *see* Appendix F.

Fischer Avenue, the Pas, 1913

CHAPTER XXI

THE NORTHERN METROPOLIS—*continued*

It is pretty generally admitted that if the Hudson Bay route is a success, the Pas should become a very large city, because of its geographical position at the entrance from the north to the immense territory comprised in that portion of Western Canada, spreading out from it in fan-like shape. It is pointed out that for a hundred miles or so, east and west, it is the only spot where the Saskatchewan River can be crossed at a relatively small expense or at all; it is argued that it is in the same position to Fort Churchill and Port Nelson on Hudson Bay as Winnipeg is to Fort William and Port Arthur on the Great Lakes. While the country between the Pas and the bay is replete with natural resources of every kind, which sooner or later will require development, it is explained that the Hudson Bay Railway, with possibly a few feeders branching out into the interior, will long suffice to take care of the traffic which will offer, and that in case the new territory develops beyond present expectations, the Pas will still be the pivotal point about which all interest will continue to gather.

Prettily located on the south shore of the Main Saskatchewan River, at the point where this beautiful stream, after receiving the waters of the Carrot River which have made it expand to the size of a majestic lake about three miles long and a mile wide, suddenly contracts itself to a strait [1] over which the

[1] In French a "pas." Otto Klotz's report of 1885 at page 17 ff. of Tyrrell's and Dowling's reports *op. cit.* says: "The action of the water in the course of time is well illustrated here. Forty years ago a lad could throw a stone from the banks of the parsonage across the river where it is now 14 chains wide. Within a few years an island upon which the Hudson's Bay Company's powder magazine was kept, has disappeared. The banks where formerly houses of the company stood (in front of the present post) have been washed away. The same fate is rapidly approaching the parsonage close by." If Mr. Klotz were to come back, he would find not only that it has been found necessary

850 feet bridge of the Hudson Bay Railway has been constructed, the Pas occupies no doubt one of the best townsites that may be imagined. The evergreen, the poplar, the cottonwood abound, giving the surroundings an aspect of freshness which is nowhere else equalled. The ground is uniformly level, sloping gently towards the River Saskatchewan on the north side, Pasquia Lake and River on the west side, and Regina Lake on the east side. The soil, being still in a primitive stage, is covered with a heavy carpet of moss, varying in depth from a few inches to several feet. Centuries of decayed vegetation have accumulated, retaining the wet of the snows and the rains which cannot drain away, but percolates with considerable difficulty through to the heavy clay subsoil often covered with extensive beds of limestone. The least ditch, however, causes the moss to dry and disappear. It takes little labour and expense to lay out streets and boulevards.

The inhabitants of the Pas have an unbounded confidence in the future of their town, and are preparing for the great things which they believe the future has in store for them. Both the Town Council [1] and Board of Trade [2] are composed of progressive men who spare neither time nor money to make known to the world advantageous features of their place, either by the building of permanent public improvements of the first order or sane publicity from which exaggeration is jealously banished.

They say that once the Hudson Bay route is fully in operation, the grain of Western Canada will all, or almost all, pass

to move the parsonage, but that the trees, which no doubt had been planted at the time it had been erected, are fast falling into the waters of the River Saskatchewan. Chas. R. Tuttle in *Our North Land*, 1885, also writes: " Forty years ago a lad could throw a stone across the river at the Pas, now it is 900 feet wide."

[1] The first Municipal Council of the town of the Pas was elected on June 20, 1912, and consisted of H. Finger (Mayor), W. Carrière, J. E. Rusk, J. F. Hogan, C. E. Senkler, W. H. Bunting, and J. Fleming.

[2] The Pas Board of Trade was formed on February 5, 1913, with A. H. de Trémaudan (President), J. H. Gordon (Vice-President), H. H. Elliott (Secretary-Treasurer), G. Halcrow, sen., G. N. Taylor, J. E. Rusk, S. V. Davies, J. P. Jacobsen, T. S. Leitch, J. Fleming, and Captain H. H. Ross (Councillors).

through their town because a saving of about 1000 miles will be available to the farmers, who will be prompt to understand what that will mean to their bank-book. Taking Saskatoon as an example, they show the following figures:

Route by the Great Lakes	Land miles	Water miles	Total miles
Saskatoon to Winnipeg	467		
Winnipeg to Port Arthur	427		
Port Arthur to Sault Ste. Marie		237	
Sault Ste. Marie to Sarnia		234	
Sarnia to Montreal (estimated)	595		
Montreal to Liverpool, 2760 miles by Belle Isle, 3007 miles by south route, average distance		2888	
Total land mileage	1489		
Total water mileage		3359	
		1489	
Total mileage			4848
Hudson Bay Route			
Saskatoon to the Pas	287		
Pas to Port Nelson	410		
Port Nelson to Liverpool		2966	
Total land mileage	697		
Total water mileage		2966	
		697	
Total mileage			3663
Difference			1185

Even if the route by the strait is to be considered impracticable, the people of the Pas say that their town is on the only route which may be used alternately with that of the Great Lakes, and as proof their figures are the following:

Route by the Great Lakes	Land miles	Water miles	Total miles
Saskatoon to Winnipeg	467		
Winnipeg to Port Arthur	427		
Port Arthur to Sault Ste. Marie		237	
Sault Ste. Marie to Sarnia		234	
Sarnia to Montreal (estimated)	595		
	1489	471	
		1489	
			1960

	Land miles	Water miles	Total miles
Route by the Great Lakes (*from previous page*)			1960
Saskatoon to the Pas	287		
Pas to Port Nelson	410		
Port Nelson to Port Nottaway		635	
Port Nottaway to Montreal (estimated)	500		
	1197	635	
		1197	
			1832
A saving of miles over the lake route			128

They go further: they smile when they are at times told that the Hudson Bay Railway is still in the experimental stage, and that it is not at all sure that it will ever be completed, or, if completed, whether it will ever be of any utility as a grain-carrying route: for they say they have forests and mines; they have lakes and rivers full of fish and handy for going from place to place and distributing the goods of the older provinces and the old world to the remote posts of the north. They show the visitors with pride over the magnificent sawmill of the Finger Lumber Company, about which the reader of these pages has read something in another chapter; they take them to the primitive docks and wharves on the Pas River and let them examine the four steamboats of the Ross Navigation Company; they introduce them to the managers of the different stores of their fast-growing town and obtain for them the opportunity of sizing up the wealth contained in the immense packs of valuable furs piled in the warehouses; they show them, at a distance of a few hundred yards, the beautiful plains which extend south-westerly and assure them that at the Pas begins a mixed farming territory which is not duplicated in the Dominion and in which settlers are only commencing to settle from the Melfort end. And they add: "We are not at all depending on the Hudson Bay Railway to make a city of the Pas. The natural resources of the country are numerous and big enough to take care of this. Under ordinary circumstances, and independently of the Hudson Bay Railway (in which, by the way, we believe because we know, being on the spot), we have here the making of a city

and we are getting ready for it." And to see the large number of substantial buildings of all kinds which are everywhere erected, it is evident, even to the casual observer, that the people of the Pas are building with the idea that their town will soon be a city, and a large city at that. They have the spirit that does things, that moves mountains, if need be. Invigorated by the hardy climate of the north, they laugh at cold winter blisters and scorching summer burns, and keep on going ahead doing things, in the belief that they have struck the one spot on earth where there is a future for the fellow with a determined will: being strong believers, they will make what they desire perforce come true. At least they have fully decided to give the project a good manly trial. And why should they fail?

Why should they fail, when in days that knew not the many things that this age is simply playing with a man did not hesitate to establish a Petrograd in the last spot in his kingdom where any one else with less vim would have dreamt of throwing the foundations of an empire's capital? Petrograd, built on a marsh, is exactly 3° further north than Port Nelson, and 3° further south than the northerly part of Hudson Strait. Its average temperature is 40° above; yet it is the capital of all the Russias. It has a population of almost 2,000,000 inhabitants, and a commerce of almost 100,000,000 rubles in grain and other natural products. Thirteen thousand boats, large and small, enter its port, Cronstadt, 16 miles distant, laden with produce of field and forest, although the navigation of the northern portion of the Baltic Sea, on which it is situated, is obstructed by ice four months in the year and descending ice from Lake Ladoga forces the authorities of the city to remove most of the bridges twice a year. Of course it was built by Peter the Great, a man who was not to be stopped by marshy bogs, ice, and climate, when he saw his opportunity to create one of the cities of the world!

Why should they fail when they have the examples of the farms of Holland conquered from the sea, of a Chicago firmly built on marsh and lake, of part of a Boston also built on a

marsh, of a Venice, once queen of the commercial world, erected on piles in the sea? All they have to do is to look around them, and they will find that their task is indeed easy, chiefly because they have behind them, to help them reach the aim they have set themselves to attain, a host of friends in the rest of the province of which their vigorous little youngster of a town is quite naturally the pet child, being the first-born of the union between the old province and the new territory. Nothing is being spared to lead the fast-growing offspring in the right path and remove from its way the tumbling-stones which might impede its progress.

True to its promise of generous assistance expressed through its First Minister on February 16, 1912, the provincial government as soon as the town has been organised municipally, has made a cash grant of $100,000, and the citizens have added to this, besides their taxes, $250,000 secured by thirty years' debentures. A system of waterworks and sewers is being constructed and electric light is installed; telephones will also soon be in operation. The town is fast passing from the stage of a small village in which it was in 1911 to that of the city it will be a few years hence; all federal and provincial offices are being located at the Pas, including customs, Dominion land office, court and jail, Royal North-Western Mounted Police headquarters, etc.

The population, including the Indians across the river, is close to 2000, 1453 of whom, according to the census taken by the Board of Trade in August 1913, are of the Caucasian race. Prior to 1909 the present Pas was an Indian reservation, used by the natives from the earliest known times, as has been seen in the preceding chapter. In the days of Lavérendrye it was "the rendezvous, every spring, of the Crees from the mountains, prairies, and rivers, to debate what they shall do, either to go to the French or the English.[1] There he (Lavérendrye)

[1] These terms, in a footnote to the report of the trials of Charles de Reinhard and Archibald M'Lellan for murder, at a court of "Oyer and Terminer" held at Quebec, May 1818, are explained to have the following meanings: "English, applied exclusively to the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, whether English, French, or half-breeds, in contradistinction to the fur traders from Canada, who are called

happened to be at the meeting of all the Crees in the spring of 1850." [1] In 1909 the Dominion Government, having previously obtained a surrender from the Indians and removed them to the north bank of the river, laid out the townsite of the Pas and placed it upon the market. The whole white population did not then exceed six families.[2] From nothing in 1909 the assessment has passed to $2,012,125.00 in 1913.[3]

Being in its infancy, it cannot be reasonably expected to find the Pas, in spite of the efforts in that direction of the town fathers, as modern and thoroughly up-to-date as the long-established city of to-day; but it is getting to that enviable stage as speedily as it is humanly possible to make it so; sidewalks are being laid, streets are being graded, modern improvements are being installed as rapidly as time and money render it possible. In a few years, nay a few months, all the advantages and commodities of modern cities will be found in the Pas. Add to these the numerous opportunities of summer excursions, on the numberless lakes and rivers surrounding the town in every direction, to the delightful groves of trees and bushes on islands or at other special spots of interest adjacent; imagine the hunting or fishing trips in which all kinds of game and fish, large or small, can be secured, almost without attention, in a wonderfully short time, and you will soon have come to the conclusion that the Pas holds one of those unique positions which are very seldom found.

Ever since the question of the Hudson Bay Railway has been on the tapis, in a practical way, the different railway companies operating in Western Canada have pushed steadily northward and secured charters with a view to connect their systems with this great national route of the future. Besides the Canadian Pacific, Canadian Northern, and Grand Trunk Pacific, the Great Northern, with its Brandon extension built

François, of whatever country or language they may be." There also I find that the French term "Métis," primitively "Métif," is derived from the Spanish "Mestice," and was introduced in the northern part of the continent by the early plain riders in their travels between Mexico and Canada.

[1] Pierre Margry, *op. cit.*

[2] *The Pas, the Gateway to Hudson Bay*, p. 18. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

as early as 1906 under the charter of the Brandon, Saskatchewan and Hudson Bay Railway, as well as several companies in the incubation state, have had the Pas as an objective point: the announcements of projected lines during the last few years have been so numerous that the drawing of them all would resemble a cat-o'-nine-tails, with the tails spread out in all directions from the Pas, and the Hudson Bay Railway as the handle, the latter lowered to the right at an angle of about 40°.

Quite naturally, real estate men have been prompt to recognise the important position of the Pas; following the admission of the town and territory into Manitoba, sales have been numerous at steadily advancing prices, until at present centrally located lots which were bought originally for $100 or $200 in 1909 are fetching as high as $10,000, while a number of acres outside the original townsite have been subdivided, placed on the market, and sold at prices varying between $50 and $1000 a lot. In view of the fact, however, that the limits of the incorporated town contain only about 750 acres and that a large population will undoubtedly settle at the south terminus of the Hudson Bay Railway with the opening of the road to traffic, and the connecting of the line with other railways, the real estate situation may be considered considerably more favourable than at many western points which have not the prospects of development that the Pas possesses. The authorities, however, will be well advised, for some time to come, to discourage the placing on the market of further subdivisions, so as to keep away from the exaggerated and unhealthy position of boom towns, unfortunately so common once in Western Canada.

I shall conclude with the following quotation from the pamphlet recently published by the Board of Trade of the Pas, under the able supervision of Dr. H. H. Elliott, its enthusiastic yet evidently all-conservative secretary:

"The Kernel of the Nut

"The Pas has the location. It is the 'gateway' to the Northland. It is at the junction of railway and waterway

communication. It is the terminus of the Hudson Bay Railway, and will be the terminus of other railways, which must build to the Pas to reach the Hudson Bay route. It is the coming railway and commercial centre of the west.

"The Dominion Government chose the townsite and placed it on the market and is bound to see that the Pas 'makes good.' The government is keeping faith, as is evidenced by the location of Hudson Bay Railway terminals, the gift of lands for public purposes, and the appropriation of $30,000 for a wharf.

"The Provincial Government is determined that New Manitoba shall live up to the prophecies made by those who fought for its addition to the province. The government has faith in the Pas, and is demonstrating its faith by good works, *e.g.* a cash grant of $100,000.00, bonds to be guaranteed for $150,000.00,[1] and the construction of a court house and jail, site and building to cost $75,000.00.

"Financial experts recognise the strategic position of the Pas, and are investing in real estate and building up the town. A company of English capitalists own twenty lots in the Pas and have erected the Royal North-West Mounted Police barracks, a laundry, a business block of four stores, four apartment blocks (comprising sixteen stores and sixty-three rooms), and fifteen residences. This company purpose erecting a large brick hotel, one hundred feet square, to contain eighty rooms, besides rotunda, offices, bar-room, sample rooms, dining-room, and kitchen. The estimated cost is $75,000.00.

"The citizens of the Pas know that they have a 'good thing' and are 'pushing it along,' as is evidenced by the construction of public works and by private enterprise.

"The outside world is beginning to see the Pas as it is. Inquiries are coming in from all parts of Canada, from the United States and from Great Britain—and what is more to the point—the people are coming.

"To those who are interested we extend a hearty welcome. Come to the Pas and confirm our statements.

[1] These bonds have since been guaranteed for $250,000.00.

"Brief and to the Point

"1. Regular lots in the original townsite are 66 feet by 132 feet; in Pas Centre, 30 to 25 feet by varying depths; in Pas Annex, 33 feet by 132 feet. Note the size of lots and compare with other towns.

"2. The Pas has only two subdivisions—Pas Centre and Pas Annex—and both are within the corporation, touching the original townsite. With the exception of a small portion of one corner of Pas Annex, the whole corporation is within a one-mile circle. It will be seen that the town is compact and that there are no subdivisions in the country.

"3. Lots sold at first sales in 1910 for $50.00 to $275.00. These lots have since sold for $4,000.00 to $10,000.00.

"4. During 1913, the year of financial stringency, the Pas failed to 'take notice,' but kept on in the even tenor of its ways—building, building, building! A visitor during the summer remarked: 'I thought the Pas was out of the world; now I know it is, since there is no evidence of the financial stringency, which has caused other towns to call a halt.'

"5. Carpenters work all winter. Workmen on the steel railway bridge worked throughout the winter of 1912-13, with the exception of about ten days. The electric light poles were set during the last week of November and the early part of December. The power house was completed in December.

"6. The Pas is a judicial district and is the seat of the county court. The town has its own police and the Royal North-West Mounted Police are always on duty. Law and order are good. If you come to the Pas, you will have to be as good as we are.

"7. The farming district of the Pas is the largest in the world, being the wheatfields and ranches of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, whose products will come direct to the Pas as soon as railway connections are made with the 'farmers' railway' (Hudson Bay Railway).

"8. Lay a straight edge on the map, from any part of the wheat belt to Port Nelson, and note how close the line comes to the Pas. Note, also, that where the line is slightly distant

from the Pas, natural obstacles must force railways to come to the Pas to reach Port Nelson, whether the Hudson Bay Railway be used or not.

"9. The Hudson Bay Railway is analogous to the Canadian Pacific Railway in every particular, except in length and difficulty of construction. The Hudson Bay Railway is much shorter and construction is comparatively easy. The Hudson Bay Railway, like the Canadian Pacific Railway, is essentially the 'farmers' railway,' intended primarily to carry grain and cattle. Like the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Hudson Bay Railway has its detractors and will triumph in spite of every opinion to the contrary. The Canadian Pacific Railway made Winnipeg; the Hudson Bay Railway will make the Pas a second and, perhaps, greater Winnipeg.

"10. The 'boosters' of the Hudson Bay route do not belong to existing railway corporations [1] who have reason to fear a direct and shorter route, quicker delivery, lower rates and better results in every way. Every 'knock' from such an enemy is a 'boost.'

"11. Don't condemn the Hudson Bay route because some one, whose pocket will be pinched, says it is no good. Investigate for yourself. Don't come to the Pas because we say so. Investigate. In other words the Hudson Bay route and the Pas will bear investigation.

"12. Observe the advertisements in this booklet. Each advertisement is that of a *bona fide* business enterprise and has been admitted to illustrate that the Pas has up-to-date

[1] "It is a matter of common historical knowledge that Sir Donald Smith always raised the most strenuous opposition to such an 'impossible' proposal. And Sir Donald carried some weight. He was the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Bank of Montreal combined—in short, the financial king of Canada for many years. . . . The Canadian Pacific Railway did not want the Hudson Bay route, because it did not want to lose its long-haul freight charges, upon which it has amassed millions to its treasury. Simple, is it not? That is why the Canadian Pacific Railway is opposed to the Hudson Bay route to-day. The other transcontinental roads are also sorry to see the Hudson Bay route rapidly becoming a certainty. They, too, fear missing a large percentage of long-haul profits."—*Chevalier de la Corne and the Carrot River Valley of Saskatchewan*, by Arthur S. Bennett, p. 15.

business men who are operating business enterprises such as exist only in a progressive town.

" 13. The Pas will be a city of great buildings—elevators, warehouses, and great commercial houses. Its position as the distributing point of Anglo-Canadian commerce will make it a ' wholesale centre.'

" 14. The Pas was incorporated in May 1912. Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars have been voted for waterworks, sewers and electric lights, and the work of installation has been started. How is that for progress?

" 15. The Board of Trade has issued this booklet. The Board of Trade is composed of the reputable business men of the Pas and is not a real estate agency. The Board of Trade is interested in the general welfare of the town and not particularly in the sale of town lots. If you desire authentic information write ' The Secretary of the Board of Trade.' He is paid to answer questions." [1]

[1] *The Pas, the Gateway to Hudson Bay*, p. 30 *et seq.*

APPENDIX A

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S POSTS AND MODES OF TRADE

(From *Cornhill Magazine*, August 1870) [1]

A TYPICAL fort of the Hudson Bay Company was not a very lively sort of affair at best. Though sometimes built on a commanding situation at the head of some beautiful river, and backed by wave of dark pine forest, it was not unpicturesque in appearance. Fancy a parallelogram enclosed by a picket 25 or 30 feet in height, composed of upright trunks of trees, placed in a trench, and fastened along the top by a rail, and you have the enclosure. At each corner was a strong bastion built of squared logs, and pierced for guns that could sweep every side of the fort. Inside this picket was a gallery running right around the enclosure, just high enough for a man's head to be level with the top of the fence. At intervals, all along the side of the picket, were loopholes for musketry, and over the gateway was another bastion from which shot could be poured on any party attempting to carry the gate. Altogether, though incapable of withstanding a ten-pounder for two hours, it was strong enough to resist almost any attack the Indians could bring against it. Inside this enclosure were the store-houses, the residences of the employés, wells, and sometimes a good garden. All night long a voyageur would, watch by watch, pace around this gallery, crying out at intervals, with a quid of tobacco in his cheek, the hours and the state of the weather. This was a precaution in case of fire, and the hour-calling was to prevent him falling asleep for any length of time. Some of the less important and more distant outposts were only rough little log cabins in the snow,

[1] Quoted by G. Mercer Adams, *The Canadian North-West, its History and its Troubles.*

without picket or other enclosure, where a "postmaster" resided to superintend the affairs of the Company.

The mode of trading was peculiar. It was a system of barter, a "made" or "typical" beaver-skin being the standard of trade. This was, in fact, the currency of the country. Thus an Indian arriving at one of the Company's establishments with a bundle of furs which he intends to sell, proceeds, in the first instance, to the trading room: there the trader separates the furs into lots, and, after adding up the amount, delivers to the Indian little pieces of wood, indicating the number of "made-beavers" to which his "hunt" amounts. He is next taken to the store-room, where he finds himself surrounded by bales of blankets, slop-coats, guns, scalping knives, tomahawks (all made in Birmingham), powder-horns, flints, axes, etc. Each article has a recognised value in "made-beavers"; a slop-coat, for example, may be worth five "made-beavers," for which the Indian delivers up twelve of his pieces of wood; for a gun he gives twenty; for a knife two; and so on, until his stock of wooden cash is expended. After finishing he is presented with a trifle besides the payment for his furs, and makes room for some one else.[1]

[1] Alexander Henry the Elder, *op. cit.* p. 320, gives the following schedule of prices as being in use in 1776 at Fort de Prairies, immediately below the Grand Forks of the Saskatchewan River:—

A gun	20	beaver skins
A stroud blanket	10	do.
A white blanket	8	do.
An axe, of one pound weight	3	do.
Half a pint of gunpowder	1	do.
Ten balls	1	do.

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTION OF HUDSON STRAIT BY A. P. LOW, F.R.G.S.[1]

Hudson Strait has a length of nearly 500 miles from Cape Chidley, on the south side of its eastern end, to Cape Wolstenholme, on the same side of the western end. The general trend of the strait is a little north of west, so that the western cape is about a degree and a half to the northward of the eastern one, and is in 62° 30′ N. latitude. At its eastern entrance the strait has a practical channel nearly 35 miles wide between the outermost Button Islands off Cape Chidley, and the shores of Resolution Island on the north side. Gray Strait is a narrower channel between the Button Islands and the southern mainland. Immediately to the westward of Cape Chidley the southern shore falls away to the southward to form the great bay of Ungava, which is 140 miles wide, and somewhat more than that distance in length. The large island of Akpatock lies in this bay, but as its north end is to the southward of a line drawn across the mouth of the bay, it does not seriously interfere with navigation in the strait.

From Cape Hopes Advance, the western point of Ungava Bay, the southern shore of the strait has a north-west direction to Cape Weggs, situated 150 miles beyond. The northern shore opposite has the same general trend, and the strait for this distance averages 60 miles across. Big Island, situated on the north side in the western half of this portion, extends southward, so as to reduce the width to 30 miles.

To the westward of Cape Weggs the general trend of the south coast is nearly due west, while the opposite side continues north-west to form Gordon Bay, after which it bends to the west and south, so that at its western end the strait is about 100 miles from mainland to mainland, but of this distance the practical channel is limited to that portion between the south

[1] M'Kenna, *op. cit.* p. 15 *et seq.*

coast and the large island of Nottingham, a distance of 35 miles.

In the western half of the strait, Charles Island, which lies about 25 miles beyond Cape Weggs, is the only obstruction to navigation. This island is 25 miles long, and lies nearly due east and west, some twenty miles from the south shore of the strait. The ship channel passes to the northward of the island, although there is a good channel on its south side.

The depth of water in the ship track through the strait varies from 50 to 200 fathoms. There are no shoals, and with ordinary precautions, there is little danger from stranding on the bold shores of either side of the strait, or on the few islands that bound the channel.

A number of safe harbours easy of approach have been explored on the southern side of the strait, and others equally good and safe are known to be located on the north side, although they are at present unsurveyed.

The passage from the western entrance of the strait to the port of Churchill, on the western side of Hudson Bay, is 500 miles. From the mouth of the strait the course is due west for 70 miles to the eastern end of the wide channel between Coats and Mansfield Islands. This channel is practically 100 miles long, and varies in width from 50 miles at the eastern end to over 100 miles at the other.

The general course of the ship track from the eastern end of this channel to Churchill is nearly south-west, and there are nowhere any dangerous shoals or other obstructions to navigation.

In the track across Hudson Bay the depth of water varies from 50 to 200 fathoms, while the approach to the low shores of Coats and Mansfield and those of the western mainland is signalled by the gradual lessening of the depth of water, which gives ample warning to ships approaching the land.

It will be seen from the above description that there is no natural difficulty in the navigation of the bay and strait so far as the depth of water, presence of obstructions, and width of channel are concerned, and if situated in a more southern region, the route would be an ideal one for the navigator.

S.S. "Lafleur," River Survey Boat, on the Saskatchewan

APPENDIX C

LAND RECLAIMABLE FROM SASKATCHEWAN RIVER

(From *Hudson's Bay Herald*, October 9, 1913)

O. W. W. CHARLTON and T. H. Dun, who have been busy on the Saskatchewan River with a party of eighteen men, commencing at Grand Rapids and working westwards, making soundings to enable the hydrographical department at Ottawa to judge whether the level of the river could be lowered in order to reclaim the immense stretches of land in the extended delta of the river, have reached town, having completed the first part of their mission. At the Demi-Charge Rapids, situated between Cross and Cedar Lakes, they found a submerged wall of rock about 1 mile long with deep water on both sides. By blasting this wall and digging a canal around the Grand Rapids at the mouth of the river, it will be possible to lower the level of the river about 19 feet. It is calculated that by this means about 4,000,000 acres of the best agricultural land to be found anywhere would be reclaimed. The cost would be about $10,000,000, or $2.50 per acre. The whole of Cedar Lake would then disappear and become an immense stretch of arable land, while the low places around Moose Lake and the Pas, which are either flooded or in danger of being flooded at high-water periods, would no longer suffer from these causes. It is believed that the lowering of the level of the river would not in the least interfere with the possibilities of navigation, as the same volume of water would continue to pass in a much narrower channel which it would naturally considerably deepen. As it is now in many places, but chiefly about Cedar Lake, navigation is somewhat impeded by the fact that it is sometimes very difficult to judge safely where the passable channel exists. The water in the Saskatchewan is getting very low and the submerged bank of the river, at the mouth of the Pas River, which at ordinary level is a danger to boats entering the Pas, is now quite visible. Were the reclaiming work done, this danger would no longer exist.

APPENDIX D

(From *Hudson's Bay Herald*, September 18, 1913)

A WEEK ago Wednesday, September 10, the Hudson Bay Construction Company inaugurated a passenger service on its construction train, at a rate of about five cents a mile. H. S. M'Cuaig, of this town, boasts having bought the first passenger ticket over the Hudson Bay Railway. He paid $2.75 for a trip to Scott, a distance of 55 miles. The names of eighteen stations and the distances between same appear on the ticket, as follows:

	Miles		Miles
The Pas	0	M'Naughton	77
Lewiston	8	Woody Lake	85
Jefferson	22	Malcolm	92
Parker	30	Colin	100
Cormorant	37	M'Millan	108
Georgetown	45	Kusko River	117
Scott	55	Setting Lake	125
M'Laren	62	Moffat	132
Limestone	72	Boyd	140

It further reads:

"Hudson's Bay Railway Train Ticket—Not transferable. Good for one continuous passage only on the train issued and between stations cancelled by punch marks. Conductor must leave this ticket in hands of passenger. No responsibility is undertaken by the contractor to forward passenger holding this ticket over any part of the route, such transportation being at the sole convenience of the contractor and subject to delays. The person holding this ticket accepts such conditions, and agrees to release the contractor from any claim for damage, delay in transit, or injury to person or property. The Hudson's Bay Construction Company, Limited, contractors."

The people of the Pas, who are familiar with what is going on on the road to the Bay, will recognise the different station

names. For the information of outsiders, however, it may be well to state that Lewiston, Jefferson, Parker, Scott, M'Laren, M'Naughton, Moffat, have been named after engineers or other employees of the Hudson Bay road; Malcolm and Colin are the two Christian names of the M'Millan Brothers, the grading contractors whose family name will also be perpetuated; Georgetown reminds one of our old friend George Cowan, the first settler of the Cormorant Lake district; Boyd is named after N. K. Boyd, ex-M.P. for Portage la Prairie, one of the chief partners of the Hudson Bay Construction Company. The other names are geographical. Between Lewiston and Jefferson there seems to be room for another station, the site of which will probably be decided later, possibly simultaneously with developments expected to take place about Clearwater Lake. It remains to say that the steel is only laid to mile 56.[1]

[1] The names of stations given here have since been changed.

APPENDIX E

THE SELECT COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY, 1857

At a meeting of the Red River Settlements held in December 1856, as a result of Ballentyne having been escorted back to the Red River by officers of the Hudson's Bay Company at Norway House where he had ventured to go to trade, one William Fair had exclaimed: "Let the world answer, let England, let Canada answer: if the company offer the native one blanket for a skin or fur, and another man, a native European, passes by and offers two blankets for that same skin, has not the native a right to take the two blankets of the latter, and refuse the one from the company?"

Whether this episode had any bearing on the inquiry which was started the following year, evidently it was feared in many quarters that the appointees would probably be guided by the wishes and influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, and, on the announcement of the formation of the committee, the *Colonial Intelligencer* said: "We regret to state that undue partiality to the company was manifested by Mr. Labouchère in selecting the members of the House of Commons who should sit upon the committee." The paper then points out that Mr. Matheson, for example, is a large stockholder in the company. Hearing that the equitable principles of the company are to form the basis of settlement, it adds: "The Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly is, forsooth, to be maintained for the benefit of the Indians! That monopoly which gives a body of traders, and their agents, irresponsible and absolute power throughout the vast regions of Rupert's Land and the adjacent territories is, after all, a blessing, and not the curse we have so often represented it to be! The people of England, however, know better."

The *Toronto Globe* of April 17, 1857, seemed also to fear the fact that Mr. Labouchère was mixed up in this inquiry. It

said: "The same Mr. Labouchère has shown himself ready to surrender for ever the vast territories in the north-west to the thraldom of the Hudson's Bay Company."

The committee, however, rendered a verdict quite favourable to the settlement of the country: its 12th resolution read as follows: "Your committee believe that the districts in the Red River, Saskatchewan, and the Mackenzie hold out inducements to enterprising individuals from Canada and from this country, for their early occupation, which ought, by every legitimate means, to be encouraged." [1]

This finding, which looked so promising to Canada, was not heralded by all with the same enthusiasm. The *Montreal Gazette* of September 16, 1857, said: "*Festina lente* is an excellent maxim with respect to the annexation or absorption of territory as in other affairs of life."

The *New York Tribune* thought very favourably of the result of the inquiry: "Congress having provided the means, by a bountiful grant of lands, for a speedy railroad communication with the valley of the Red River, many years will not probably elapse before this region, till now the favourite haunt of the savage, will be dotted all over with farms, and villages, and embryo cities."

[1] *Report of Select Committee to consider state of British Possessions in North America*, July 31, 1857.

APPENDIX F

"THE" OR "LE"—WHICH?

(*Manitoba Free Press*)

THE following communication has reached the *Free Press* in regard to the name of the new town which is the centre of the lately acquired extension of the territory of Manitoba:

"Having noticed lately that some despatches from the southern terminus of the Hudson Bay Railway were headed The Pas (pronounced Paw), the reappearance of this hybrid name has set me wondering why this form, which I thought had been finally abandoned, should again find people willing to employ it. I have taken the trouble of studying most fully documents, historical and traditional, bearing on the subject, and I now take the liberty of asking you, Mr. Editor, to kindly open the columns of your valuable journal to the few facts and remarks which I have gathered on the subject, as well as the only natural conclusion which, in my opinion, can reasonably be arrived at.

"When, last January, the inhabitants of the new northern metropolis, Le Pas, were asked to vote on a money by-law providing for the expenditure of $120,000 on sewers and waterworks, there was not one single vote registered against the proposition. This established a new record in such matters in Western Canada, and showed how well united the people of that town are. There is only one point, apparently, on which opinions differ, and which causes a little friction between the two camps in which the population is on this account divided. That is whether 'Le Pas' or 'The Pas' should be the name of the south terminus of the Hudson Bay Railway.

"In view of the considerable attention which this town has

The Harbour on the Pas River at the Pas

attracted for the past eighteen months, a short and impartial study of the subject should not be amiss.

"As far as modern history goes, Le Pas dates back to 1840. In that year, Rev. Henry Budd, an Indian catechist from York Factory, founded there a Church of England mission, which was known successively as Devon Mission, Cumberland Mission and Pas Mission. On his arrival he had found the place called 'Le Pas de la Rivière' and evidently found it ultimately necessary to preserve this name, although with the help of the Hudson's Bay Company it was Anglicized into the form The Pas. The tombstone of the Indian preacher is still to be seen in the old cemetery by Christ Church, at the northern end of Fischer Avenue. The inscription on it reads as follows: 'Sacred to the memory of the Rev. Henry Budd, who died April 2, 1875, aged 61 years. Named after one of the founders of the C.M.S. The first Indian convert and clergyman in Rupert's Land. An earnest and faithful minister of the gospel for 25 years. Beloved by the flock over which he was pastor.'

"From that time to about 1895, the place continued to be known as The Pas and Pas Mission among the English-speaking element of the population, and Le Pas among the French-speaking people. In that year a post-office was established to which the name The Pas was given.

"In 1908, the Canadian Northern Railway named its station Le Pas, and in 1911 the post-office department followed suit and changed the name from The Pas into Le Pas. The same fall the local newspaper, the *Hudson's Bay Herald*, was established, which naturally adopted the name used by both the railway and the post-office department. In the spring of 1912 a deputation went down to Winnipeg to obtain the incorporation of the town under the name of The Pas, which was granted, although the new electoral district formed of Manitoba's new territory had been previously called Le Pas. Those who are in favour of the French form say that in doing this the members of the deputation overrode their instructions, as the mandate they had received did not authorise them to unnecessarily change established conditions.

"Two etymologies are offered as to the word 'Pas.' Those who are in favour of the form 'The Pas' say that it is a contraction of the Indian word 'opasquiaow,' which, they explain, means 'water converging to a narrows, with high land and spruce trees on either side.' Those who stand for 'Le Pas' rejoin that, if it be so, it should be pronounced 'The Pass,' since in the Indian word the 's' is sounded, and they offer the counter explanation that 'pas' is a French word which means 'narrow passage,' as employed in the well-known geographical terms, Pas de Calais, Pas de Roland, Pas du Loup, etc. In fact, the Indian and French meanings do not differ materially, both are perfectly descriptive of the aspect which is characteristic of the Saskatchewan River at Mission Island, where the Hudson Bay Railway bridge has been erected. It must be admitted, at any rate, that if the word 'pas' is a contraction of the Indian word 'opasquiaow,' it is at least pronounced after the French fashion. In English, even if understood in the sense of dance step, as used by Chaucer, the correct pronunciation should be 'pass.'

"But the history of that place goes much further back than 1840, and it is there that the French etymologist finds his most weighty material. I believe that your readers will find the facts that I am going to rapidly enumerate, interesting and given in an impartial manner, although, favouring the French form and believing that it is better known by the public at large than the English form, I shall continue to use Le Pas in my narrative.

"To Chevalier Pierre and his brother François, sons of the now famous western discoverer, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Vérendrye, is generally ascribed the honour of having discovered the Saskatchewan River, which they ascended as far as the forks in the fall of 1741. Before them Henry Kellsey had taken a trip south-west of Port Nelson as early as 1691, but it is not probable that he went as far south as the Saskatchewan River, and in 1739 a French half-breed by the name of Joseph La France, a native of Michili Makinak, on Lake Huron, had set out for Hudson Bay, and finally spent the winter of 1740-41 near Le Pas, on Saskaram Lake. It

seems, however, impossible to verify the stories of Robson and Dobbs, and for this reason most historians do not mention them.

"Leaving their father at Fort de la Reine (Portage la Prairie), the two younger la Vérendryes had started northward, discovered Lake Manitoba, on the west side of which they had founded Fort Dauphin, subsequently reached the Saskatchewan River, established Fort Bourbon on the west end of Cedar Lake and Fort Poskoiac, where Le Pas is to-day.

"According to most reliable historians such as Rev. E. Petitot, laureate of the Geographical Society of London, and Rev. A. G. Morice, member of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba and British Columbia, and who is admitted an authority on western history by Catholics and Protestants alike, the two younger la Vérendryes named that part of the Saskatchewan River flowing between the Junction point of the north and south branches above Fort à la Corne and Le Pas, Riviere du Pas, out of devotion to their mother, Marie Anne Dandonneau du Sablé de l'Isle du Pas, daughter of the marquis of that name. In support of this version, Rev. E. Petitot states that during his trip up the river in 1862, on arriving at Le Pas, his French half-breed guides exclaimed on sighting the wide expanse of the Saskatchewan River: 'La Riviere du Pas!' 'And the Saskatchewan?' 'There is no river of that name. This is the Riviere du Pas; we know of no other.' This opinion is confirmed by John M'Lean, who in his notes of a 25 years' service in the Hudson Bay territory, published in 1849, wrote: 'We arrived on the 5th of August (1833) at Riviere du Pas, where an old Canadian, M. Constant, had fixed his abode, who appeared to have an abundance of the necessaries of life, and a large family of half-Indians, who seemed to claim him as their sire.'

"Dr. Bryce says that la Vérendrye's sons shortened the name of the river, which was 'Paskoyac,' to 'Pas.' James Settee, a minister of the gospel at Cumberland House, says that the French-Canadian half-breeds called the Saskatchewan River 'Riviere du Pas.' He has lived in the country for years, and before him his father and mother lived in it.

" In my opinion, however, it seems strange that if this name were given to the Saskatchewan River by the two younger la Vérendryes, it should not be mentioned on the map which was on their return prepared by their father, and on which it seems evident that the Saskatchewan River from Le Pas is named Baskoia. On the other hand the map may have been prepared in the absence of the two young men, and on their data, while they were away on further discoveries. This would not have prevented the name ' Riviere du Pas ' being preserved among the French half-breeds, who had heard it employed by the two la Vérendryes and the men in their party.

" In 1763, when Canada was ceded to England by the Treaty of Paris, of the French traders and missionaries who had accompanied or followed the la Vérendryes on their trip up the Saskatchewan, there were hardly any left, they having returned to Quebec to take part in the fight which culminated in England getting possession of almost half a continent. The result was that the French language almost disappeared from the land, being retained only by the Metis and some of their Indian allies. Later, however, about 1783, the Scotch merchants who had commenced hieing away to the Far West as early as 1760 again employed the ' Coureurs des Bois ' and ' Voyageurs ' in their expeditions, and as all their men spoke French among themselves, the French expressions as well as names of places were retained, for some time, at least. In some cases, however, they were unable to account for the meaning of some of them, and so Riviere du Pas degenerated into Le Pas de la Riviere, these men, no doubt, imagining that the name had been given on account of the narrow passage at Mission Island.

" No one will try to deny that French was very much in use among the Scotch merchants, who, as soon as they were able to get them, used none but French-speaking employees, on account of their being better adapted, by years of residence in the country and contact with its Indian population, to the hardships of the fur trade. This is evidenced by the terms used even in the reports of these merchants. M'Tavish, of the

X. Y. Company, in 1779, was nicknamed 'Le Premier' or 'Le Marquis,' while such appellations as 'Les Petits,' 'La Petite Compagnie,' 'Pot au Beurre,' 'Cantine Salope,' 'Mangeurs de Lard,' 'Le Rouge,' 'Le Blanc,' 'Le Borgne,' 'Le Picoté,' 'Les Vachers,' etc., were quite common.

"It would, therefore, be quite unreasonable to deny that Le Pas is undoubtedly much older than the hybrid form, The Pas.

"Another feature favouring the form Le Pas is the fact that about 1800 a French-Canadian and native of Three Rivers, named Constant, settled on the point where the town is now located, cleared the ground of the trees that were there, and started farming. According to his grandson, Antoine Constant, the present chief of the Indians of the Pas reserve, from whose lips this information has been obtained, Constant married a Sauteaux woman, who gave him two boys and four daughters. The present chief's father, whose name was also Antoine, married a Cree woman, who bore him five boys and four daughters. Now, to any unprejudiced person, the question is asked: Is it likely that the first Constant, who was probably one of these coureurs des bois or voyageurs, above mentioned, would have called Le Pas anything but Le Pas? Is it reasonable to imagine that he may have called it The Pas?

"The remark has been made that The Pas has been in use by the government on its maps and in its reports, principally those emanating from the Indian Department. This is not denied, but the same may be said of Le Pas. For example, Le Pas is to be seen on the official plan of township 56, range 26. W. 1st M. In his booklet, *The Hudson Bay Route*, published in 1908 by direction of the Department of the Interior, J. A. M'Kenna uses the form Le Pas. In the 1912 report of Indian Inspector Jackson and Indian Agent Fischer, Le Pas can be read. As a matter of fact, both terms have been employed, chiefly recently.

"The object of this article is to give the facts just as they are found and without partiality. In conclusion, the writer might be permitted to make the following remark: We British should be satisfied with having conquered this part of the world. In this, imitating our cousins of the United States,

we should be willing to let the places which remind one of the early history of the country retain the names which are so characteristic of its early settlement by the European nations, and not grudge to a nation with whose people we are now allied the satisfaction of bringing back some of its ancient history, when this satisfaction does not extend beyond the naming of a place. Let us be generous, and so long as tradition does not conflict with common sense, let us permit the right to our French co-citizens to retain even so little a share in the building up of our great western country. They have been at the battle: why refuse them their place at the triumph? The victor is worthy of the spoils.—Yours truly,

"FAIR PLAY.

"WINNIPEG, *May* 15, 1913."

APPENDIX G

(From *The Winnipeg Telegram*, Saturday, November 28, 1914)

Doctor W. Sinclair, of the Pas, who has recently completed a trip along the line of the Hudson Bay Railway to Port Nelson, was in Winnipeg this week. He talked most entertainingly about the north country and disclosed scores of splendid photographs he made on his trip. The country traversed by the Hudson Bay Railway, between the Pas and Hudson's Bay, is all, more or less, wooded, and for the first 150 miles beyond the Pas it is but slightly elevated above the local waterworks. Consequently, in most places, it will require draining before it can be used for agricultural or grazing purposes. Beyond that point the land gradually rises above the local streams and lakes, until it reaches a height of 200 feet, about 60 miles from Port Nelson. From there to the harbour the banks of the river and the tributary lakes gradually lower until they are not more than 50 feet high.

The doctor said: "Beyond Thicket portage the rock is covered by clay varying from a few feet to several hundred feet, but deep enough in all places for agricultural purposes.

"The surface for the most part is composed of alluvial deposit, containing a large percentage of decayed vegetable matter, with a heavy clay subsoil, and for miles, in many places, repeated fires had destroyed the forest, with which the land has been covered, and only fallen and decaying spruce is to be seen on ground thickly grown with fireweed, peavine, and small fruit, with an occasional birch or poplar grove.

"One cannot help seeing, in imagination, prosperous farms and villages inhabited, not by farmers drawn from the prairies, as their ideas of farming are on too large a scale, but by a population from across the ocean, who will be glad to farm fertile soil so near the European market.

"I need hardly mention the lakes, teeming with the greatest

variety of fish, because all reports have mentioned these, as well as the mineral prospects, which are already beginning to attract attention.

" Beginning about 100 miles north-east of the Pas, and continuing parallel to the Hudson Bay Railway for a distance of nearly 200 miles, until it joins the Nelson River, in Split Lake, is a series of lakes linked together by a river of considerable size, known as Grass River. The shores and islands of these are thickly wooded with good-sized spruce, and each lake in succession tumbles into the Grass River over a fall, ranging from 15 to 50 feet. I have visited the Niagara; I have gone as far as Switzerland, to admire nature's handiwork, but I was fascinated by a canoe trip on the Grass River, and gazed with awe on the mighty torrent and ice-scarred rocks of the Lower Nelson.[1]

" I had a good opportunity to study the climatic conditions at a season when such conditions are important from an agricultural standpoint, as from August 11 to September 21 I slept in a tent, rising at daylight every morning. There were no signs of frost on grass or pool until September 7, when there was a heavy white frost, where I camped at Kettle Rapids, 150 miles from Port Nelson. On September 8 there was again white frost, but not quite as heavy, and it did not freeze again until my trip was completed.

" On September 12, in company with Rev. Mr. Fox, I visited his garden at Split Lake. It was still absolutely untouched by frost. Three weeks previous to this (August 22) I had the pleasure of dining with the gentleman and his wife, at which time they served new potatoes from this garden. He informed me it had been planted on June 12, and that the seed was in bad shape, having been brought all the way from Winnipeg by boat; but what grew had grown luxuriantly, and I must say I never tasted better.

" On a ' tote ' road near Setting Lake, on August 13 I

[1] One reads in the *Pas Herald and Mining News* of April 9, 1915: " J. B. Challis, superintendent of the water power branch, writes that a reconnaissance of Grass River will be undertaken this summer, to determine the water power available. The information will then be given to the Board of Trade."

Work at Port Nelson, 1914

Photo by Dr. W. Sinclair, 1914.

plucked several heads of well-matured ripe barley, which had grown from seed, dropped from transport loads the previous winter. On September 3 at Standing Rock portage, near the Manitou crossing of the Nelson, I found perfectly matured oats, barley, and timothy, which had been planted the same way.

"The Hudson Bay Railway has no sharp curves and no difficult grades. It follows a natural valley, which slopes gradually from 820 at the Pas to 28 feet at Port Nelson or 800 feet in 400 miles. Eighty-pound steel is being used, and a siding nearly a mile long being placed every 7 miles, all of which will facilitate the rapid handling of heavy loads.

"One hundred and seventy-four miles have been completed and the grade is almost ready for 70 miles more. Track-laying, which has been held up since September 22, owing, in the first place, to some unfinished cuts, but lately to the heavy rain, softening the grade, will be resumed as soon as the grade freezes, and pushed with all speed to Manitou, Mile 240, where the bridge builders will hold it up for a time.

"Beyond Manitou the grade is almost finished for 50 miles, and provisions will be distributed from that point to the sea this winter.

"When my canoe rounded Flamborough Head on September 1, at 11 a.m., I got my first view of the great bay, which is certain to revolutionise the transportation problems of Western Canada and a large part of the United States. Along the left-hand shore, as we sped down with the ebbing tide, I could see the piers and wireless station becoming more distinct every minute. Out 1¼ miles off the end of pier No. 1, lay the steamer *Sheba*, a steel tramp of 4000 tons; near her lay the fisheries department schooner, in which Captain Coma was exploring the west shore of the bay. Farther out lay two other steamers, waiting their turn to come in and unload.

"On a nearer view the harbour was a whirl of activity. Seven hundred and twenty-eight men were at work, and each man seemed to have work to do. Some were building bunk-houses and dining-halls for the men, and store-houses for the supplies. Some were unloading the ships, using for this

purpose two fine steam lighters, and working night and day, whenever the tides were favourable, as the piers are not yet far enough out to allow even the lighter to come in at low tide. By others, a tremendous pile of material was being assembled and riveted into pipe, which, when finished, will be six or seven miles long.

" More similar material is being made into huge barrel-like structures, which will be placed in pairs, and used to float this pipe from the dredge, which when ready will operate out in the channel, widening and deepening where necessary, while the silt sucked up from the bottom will be sent with tremendous force through these miles of pipes and deposited into cribs, being prepared to receive it. Thus the piers which are now dry at low tide will be extended out to the river channel in which the *Sheba* lay anchored. So the long sloping beach will be reclaimed for terminal purposes and the harbour widened and deepened.

" Up on the hillside a steam shovel slowly cut its way to the higher land, a small terminal engine puffed majestically along, followed by trains of loaded cars. A locomotive crane came up the pier, groaning under the load of some heavy piece of machinery. Wireless messages flashed back and forth from steamers on the bay—and again overland to the Pas.

" It was with difficulty that I realised that I was really wide awake, and that this was indeed Hudson Bay."

APPENDIX H

ALEXANDER HENRY AND CHATIQUE AT THE PAS

ALEXANDER HENRY, the elder, was at Fort Bourbon on Cedar Lake on October 7, 1775: on October 26 he was at Cumberland House: his adventure at the Pas, in which Chatique, the Indian chief, was the hero, took place between these two dates. His own narrative follows:

"At eighty leagues above Fort de Bourbon, at the head of a stream which falls into the Sascatchiwaine, and into which we had turned, we found the Pasquayah village. It consisted of thirty families, lodged in tents of a circular form, and composed of dressed ox-skins, stretched upon poles twelve feet in length, and leaning against a stake driven into the ground in the centre.

"On our arrival, the chief, named Chatique, or the Pelican, came down upon the beach, attended by thirty followers, all armed with the bows and arrows, and with spears. Chatique was a man of more than six feet in height, somewhat corpulent, and of a very doubtful physiognomy. He invited us to his tent, and we observed that he was particularly anxious to bestow his hospitalities on those who were the owners of the goods. We suspected an evil design; but judged it better to lend ourselves to the treachery, than to discover fear. We entered the lodge accordingly, and soon perceived that we were surrounded by armed men.[1]

"Chatique presently rose up, and told us that he was glad to see us arrive; that the young men of the village, as well as himself, had long been in want of many things of which we were possessed in abundance; that we must be well aware of his power to prevent our going further; that if we passed now, he could put us all to death on our return; and that under these circumstances, he expected us to be exceedingly liberal

[1] "With Henry in the lodge were the Frobishers, Peter Pond, a trader named Cadotte, and one or two others."—Burpee, *op. cit.* p. 311.

in our presents: adding, that to avoid misunderstanding, he would inform us of what it was that he must have. It consisted in three casks of gunpowder; four bags of shot and ball; two bales of tobacco, three kegs of rum, and three guns; together with knives, flints and some smaller articles. He went on to say, that he had before now been acquainted with white men, and knew that they promised more than they performed; that with the number of men which he had, he could take the whole of our property, without our consent; and that therefore his demands ought to be regarded as very reasonable; that he was a peaceable man, and one that contented himself with moderate views, in order to avoid quarrels; finally, that he desired us to signify our assent to his proposition, before we quitted our places.

"The men in the canoes exceeded the Indians in number; but they were unarmed, and without a leader. Our consultation was therefore short, and we promised to comply. This done, the pipe was handed round as usual; and the omission of this ceremony, on our entrance, had sufficiently marked the intentions of Chatique. The pipe dismissed, we obtained permission to depart, for the purpose of assorting the presents; and, these bestowed, or rather yielded up, we hastened away from the plunderers.

"We had supposed the affair finished; but, before we had proceeded two miles, we saw a canoe behind us. On this, we dropped astern, to give the canoes that were following us an opportunity of joining, lest, being alone, they should be insulted. Presently, however, Chatique, in a solitary canoe, rushed into the midst of our squadron, and boarded one of our canoes, spear in hand, demanding a keg of rum, and threatening to put to death the first that opposed him. We saw that our only alternative was, to kill this daring robber, or to submit to his exaction. The former part would have been attended with very mischievous consequences; and we therefore curbed our indignation, and chose the latter. On receiving the rum, he saluted us with the Indian cry, and departed."[1]

[1] Henry, *op. cit.* p. 259 *et seq.*

APPENDIX I

"THE UNEXPLOITED WEST"

UNDER this title, a most interesting compilation of all available information as to the resources of Northern Canada has just been published by Ernest J. Chambers, Major, Corps of Guides, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, under the direction of F. C. C. Lynch, Superintendent of the Railway Lands Branch of the Department of the Interior. Those of our readers more specially interested in this feature of our subject will find the perusal of this publication extremely helpful. The first five chapters of Major Chambers' work deal with the Keewatin area which, in 1912, was taken out of the North-West Territories and divided between Manitoba and Ontario. Starting with an opinion that the term "Fertile Belt," described in the agreement of 1867 between the Dominion of Canada and the Hudson's Bay Company as being bounded "on the South by the United States boundary; on the West by Rocky Mountains; on the North by the northern branch of the Saskatchewan; on the East by Lake Winnipeg, Lake of the Woods, and the waters connecting them," is only a "catchy expression" which creates the impression that the territory beyond the Saskatchewan River is nothing more than a desert, the author shows, by references to the reports of explorers, that Northern Canada is still a *Terra Incognita*, containing in fact valuable resources of all sorts. He points out that the study of the early explorations, official and unofficial, of the men about whom we have ourselves written in the first part of this book, and the parliamentary investigations, British and Canadian, from 1749 to our days, show that the Hudson's Bay Company was the main factor responsible for the ignorance in which the world has so long and so constantly been kept about the great advantages offered by

Northern Canada. Early agricultural experiments and their successes, disclosed by the evidence given before the Parliamentary Committee of 1749, are carefully dealt with. Many areas fit for agriculture are described, wild fruits are shown to grow in profusion, successful gardens are mentioned. In what is called the clay belt, it is shown that much country capable of improvements by drainage and many natural hay meadows exist, favoured with a climate much warmer than further east. Considerable areas of good timber are spoken of; the range of the most important trees is given and special reference is made to the banksian pine, the marketable value of which is well known. Forests of trees in many places that would make good logs and much pulpwood, occasional beautiful forests of aspen poplar and magnificent coniferous species north-west of Lake Winnipeg are described. It is shown how, unfortunately, much destruction is wrought by forest fires, which, however, offer the advantage of an ample supply of timber for fuel. Water power on the Nelson is briefly dealt with. Coming to the subject of economic minerals, Major Chambers shows how the rocks in many cases are highly magnetic, and that norite rock similar to that at Sudbury is found about Trout Lake. He deals with the peat north of Lake Winnipeg, and speaks of the " large possibilities " in existence in the extensive district underlaid by Keewatin and Huronian rocks. Gypsum, building granites, quartz veins on the Grassy River below Reed Lake, possibilities of nickel occurrences, are among the minerals also touched upon. As to the game, fur-bearing animals and fish, the author shows flocks of wild fowl obscuring the sky, describes six species of seal in Hudson Bay, presents the country stocked with a multitude of animals of various kinds, and depicts white fish of all description abounding in the myriads of lakes and rivers. The commercial value of the sturgeon fisheries is particularly treated. In fine, thanks to its highly picturesque scenery and hunting and fishing and other sporting opportunities, Northern Canada is said to be destined to become in the near future the playground of the Dominion.

Even the "Barren Lands," of which, however, there is only a small portion within the limits of New Manitoba, are, in the opinion of Major Chambers, a comparatively fertile country. The explorers have declared the term a misnomer. Some notes are given about the chief rivers and lakes of the immense region known by that name. The Thelon River offers an inland waterway for steamers via Chesterfield Inlet, a distance of five hundred and fifty miles into the interior. The country is similar to the tundra of Siberia, with the seasons progressing unevenly but rapidly. In the natural prairies of the Thelon valley, a limited amount of agriculture may be possible in places. There are phenomenal extensions of tree growth within the "Arctic Prairie" along the valley of the Thelon River, about the east end of Great Slave Lake and between Great Bear Lake and the Coppermine River; black spruce, larch, white spruce, banksian pine and birch are found in abundance. Deposits of native copper are found in the "Barren Lands" region, where a vast probable minerals bearing country in the interior can be reached via Chesterfield Inlet and the Thelon River. Iron, gold, silver, lignite and soft coal are known to exist. Millions of caribou roam at large, taking fourteen days to pass at a given point, in such a mass that in the words of an eye-witness in 1877 "daylight could not be seen through the column." The actual value of these immense herds should be very great, whether they be domesticated or replaced by the Lapland reindeer. The "Arctic Prairie" is also the home of the musk-ox and of innumerable other fur-bearing animals, including the polar bear; there the wild geese nest. Lakes, rivers and sea coasts are teeming with fish, among which are found the arctic salmon, the trout, several kinds of white fish and grayling. Can the "Barren Lands" be inhabited by the white? asks the author, and he mentions Yakutsk, a town of about five thousand people in Siberia, which has a mean winter temperature of $-40.4°$ Fahr., and many other places in Northern Asia where a still lower mean temperature is common, one place having a mean winter temperature of $-50.2°$ Fahr. At Fort Churchill the mean winter temperature is $-20.5°$

Fahr., and it is not likely that any part of the "Arctic Prairie" has a mean winter temperature of 30° Fahr.

The lure of the "Barren Lands" is superbly described in the words of Warburton Pike, the author of *The Barren Lands of Northern Canada:* "To the man who is not a lover of nature in all her moods the Barren Grounds must always be a howling, desolate wilderness, but for my part, I can understand the feeling that prompted Salatha's answer to the worthy priest, who was explaining to him the beauties of Heaven. 'My father, you have spoken well; you have told me that heaven is very beautiful; tell me one thing more. Is it more beautiful than the country of the musk-ox in summer, when sometimes the mist blows over the lakes, and sometimes the water is blue, and the loons cry very often? That is beautiful, and if Heaven is still more beautiful, my heart will be glad, and I shall be content to rest there till I am very old.'"[1]

[1] The matter of this Appendix, for the most part, is merely a somewhat arranged reproduction of Chapters I.-V. and XIX.-XXII. of Major Chambers' book.

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